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THE LAND BILL.

FEW candid inquirers will presume, after a week's study of the Irish Land Bill, to assert that they thoroughly understand it. The prominence which is given to the right of selling the tenant's interest seems to prove that the framers of the Bill, or perhaps its single author, appreciated but imperfectly the economic tendencies of the scheme. Mr. GLADSTONE was misled into the use of a fallacious argument by a hasty suggestion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL. It required no WOODFALL descending the steps of a law bookcase to confirm the proposition that leasehold interests, for however short a term, are assignable by the ordinary law. In default of a stipulation to the contrary in his lease or agreement, every tenant for a year may sell the remainder of his term, but he acquires no claim to the goodwill of his holding, and the landlord may recover possession at the expiration of the term of notice. The purchaser of Irish tenant-right will either retain the land for fifteen years after the expiration of the current tenancy, or be entitled to compensation for disturbance. The vendor will, in spite of Mr. GLADSTONE's protestations eleven years ago, have acquired a share of the inheritance, which he may afterwards transmit to his assignee. In some cases the price will be equal to ten or even fifteen years' purchase of the fee simple; and, as Mr. GLADSTONE himself cannot create an estate out of nothing, the whole amount which may be sold will, where the Ulster custom has not previously prevailed, have been carved out of the property of the landlord. It is evident that the value of the tenant-right will vary inversely with the rent. A holding under a liberal landlord may be reasonably worth a considerable sum. It may be admitted that the owner is not robbed of the balance because he would not have exacted the full rent either from the actual occupier or from a successor; but he had the satisfaction of knowing that his tenants had a beneficial interest in their farms, dependent to a certain extent on their good conduct and on their ability to cultivate the land properly. The indefinite right of ownership is to be commuted into a saleable commodity gratuitously vested, not in the landlord, but in a stranger.

Not only Land League orators, but more plausible theorists on Irish land tenure, have habitually complained of rack-rents, or, in other words, of large and excessive charges imposed on the occupier of the soil. It is admitted that on the majority of estates, and especially on the largest properties, the rent falls far short of the amount which might have been exacted; but many cases remain in which the owner has probably in fixing the rent taken advantage of the necessities of the tenant. Mr. GLADSTONE's free sale will subject nearly the whole land in the country to a rack-rent, or, in other words, to the payment of its full annual value. The purchaser of tenant-right will have to pay the rent, which may perhaps be moderate, and also the interest of the purchase-money, which will be at least equal to the margin between the rent and the full annual value. The operation of the power of free sale on tenants who have not exercised their privilege has already been illustrated by a well-known result of the Act of 1870. The transfer of property, with or without, as Mr. GLADSTONE calmly observed, the consciousness of the legislator, gave the occupier possession of a marketable security on which loans could be raised. Vast sums have consequently been borrowed at usurious

interest from local money-lenders, whose annual claims are now added to those of the landlords. A loan at the ordinary rate of interest is not necessarily a loss; but, when money is borrowed at seven, eight, or ten per cent., the debtor is necessarily impoverished. There can be little doubt that when tenant-right is gratuitously conferred on every occupier, a large portion of the value will soon be pledged to usurers. It cannot be denied that, on the whole, the recipients of the boon will be enriched by the acquisition of sixty or eighty millions which now belong to the landlords; but the ultimate gain to the tenants will, for the reasons which have been given, fall far short of the losses suffered by the victims of spoliation.

The fixity of tenure which is indirectly created by the Bill will be subject to one nominal limitation. Eviction is still to be the remedy for non-payment of rent, after the amount due to the landlord has been abridged at the discretion of the Court which has to supply the deficiencies of legislation. It might be supposed from a perusal of the Bill that, when rents had once been adjusted to an arbitrary standard, there would be no further difficulty in recovering a just and undisputed debt. Mr. GLADSTONE and his colleagues in framing the measure have reckoned without the Land League, and have forgotten the successful intimidation with which they have lately had to deal. There is no reason to believe that the new rent will be more sacred than the old; and the agitators candidly give the Government warning that their hostility has not been bought off by concession. Mr. PARNELL, turning, after the manner of demagogues, a not improbable conjecture into a positive assertion, informs an excited mob that the comparative liberality, which he acknowledges as characteristic of the Bill, is wholly due to the obstruction which was offered to the measure for protecting life and property by himself and his colleagues. The historical or apocryphal series of twenty-two successive drafts corresponded to as many acts of submission to the dictates of the Land League. In February the occupier would, according to Mr. PARNELL, have abstracted from his landlord a mere fraction of the estate. In April he has, thanks to the PARNELLS, the BIGGARS, and the MCCARTHYs, established a claim to sixty or eighty millions, which may, by a repetition of the process, be greatly increased hereafter. It is unnecessary to inquire whether there is any kind of foundation for statements which are at least largely exaggerated. The provisions of the Bill are somewhat less outrageous than the conclusions of the BESSBOROUGH Commission, which were probably framed without reference to Parliamentary obstruction. Mr. PARNELL's threats are more worthy of consideration than his complacent bluster. He announces as a supplement to the comparatively modest proposals of the Government the intention of forcibly expropriating those whom he chooses to call bad landlords. If his words are to be literally interpreted, it might be supposed that a direct invitation to the populace to robbery and violence was one of the crimes against which the Protection Act was directed; but Mr. PARNELL is perhaps too formidable a person to be molested by a Liberal Government. At the instigation of himself and his fellows, large numbers of landowners have been plundered and threatened; and he now seems to profess a determination to continue the reign of anarchy, and the process of spoliation, when so-called fair rents have been assessed by the tribunals to be con-

stituted by the Bill. If there were any advantage in arguing with the enemies of society, it might be asked how, after the passing of the proposed Act, one landlord can be better than another. The whole body will be reduced to the condition of annuitants or incumbrancers with scarcely any power of exercising influence on the prosperity of their tenants. By the term bad landlords Mr. PARNELL means to designate all persons entitled to the receipt of rent. While he announces that, in punishment of their assumed guilt they are to be forcibly expropriated, he furnishes an instructive comment on the clauses of the Bill which make payment of rent a condition of tenure. If force only means legislative compulsion, it would be interesting to learn whether the expropriated owners are to receive compensation.

The litigation which will, under the provisions of the Bill, be inevitable and universal, may perhaps be necessary, on the fundamental assumption that the ownership and occupation of land are no longer to be regulated by contract. If the parties concerned are to be superseded in the regulation of their own affairs, some kind of judicial tribunal must be substituted. In the present case it may be admitted that the landlords or their representatives had, before the introduction of the Bill, for the most part assented to the theory of arbitration. The clause which provides for the deduction from the rent of the tenants' contingent right to compensation for disturbance seems so extravagantly unjust, that it may perhaps have been misunderstood. The vastness of the task which will be imposed on the Land Commission and the auxiliary Courts has perhaps not been fully appreciated. Some of the problems which will be submitted to the Commission are wholly insoluble; but probably it will not become necessary to examine whether a landlord is justified in rejecting as a tenant the assignee of a former occupier on the ground of bad character. In those instances in which the defect of character consists in notorious perpetration of murder, the prudent landlord will, for obvious reasons, decline to raise the objection. In the ordinary case of fixing the rent, the County Court of the Commission will soon fall into grooves which may or may not coincide with rules deduced from sound principle. In all cases in which judicial functions are exercised outside the range of positive law, the fortunes of litigants are regulated by "the length of the judge's foot." It will be in the power of the Commission, which need include but one actual or former judge, to increase or diminish by an indefinitely large percentage the remnant of property which is left by the Bill to Irish landowners. The Commissioners will probably be suspected, either by their own social equals or by the disaffected peasantry, of partiality and injustice. It will be well if they add extraordinary courage and independence to superhuman sagacity.

THE SUBMISSION OF THE TEKES.

THE supposed delight of saying "I told you so!" is limited to very small minds, and we do not profess the slightest pleasure at learning that the value of Sir CHARLES DILKE's statements as to the attitude of the new Czar towards Central Asia was correctly appraised in these columns. Lord HARTINGTON's saving caution sufficiently demonstrated the importance of that statement the night after it was made, and when it had served its turn. There is a well-known weapon, called a trade musket, which is, we believe, still manufactured by the constituents of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN in considerable numbers. The object of this weapon is not to go off with safety to the bearer, but to be sold; and, when it has been sold, the responsibility of the maker and seller for it is held to have entirely ceased. It has fulfilled the law of its being, and that is sufficient. In the same way, Sir CHARLES DILKE's statement, made, it is believed, on the authority of the German Foreign Office, that ALEXANDER III. had recalled General SKOBLEFF, and had put a stop to the operations which General SKOBLEFF had been conducting, had a very definite object—that is to say, the frustration of the arguments of the opponents of the Government and the confirmation of its supporters. We do not in the least suspect Sir CHARLES of inventing it or of asking the obliging German authority for it. It was sufficient that it lay in his way, and he used it with judgment and effect. Nor need we concern ourselves about the quarrel which the very remarkable

sequel of this incident has caused between the chief morning and the chief evening organ of the supporters of the Government. The *Daily News* is unquestionably justified in the interpretation it puts upon General SKOBLEFF's despatches. The exact itinerary and whereabouts of that officer during last week are points of not the very slightest importance. The simple fact which is of importance is that, whereas he was said to be recalled more than three weeks ago, he has not been recalled at all, and that whereas it was announced that a stop was to be put to the operations in Central Asia, those operations have been allowed to mature in the complete submission and subjugation of the Turkomans of the Akhal Tekke district. This is certainly putting a stop to operations after a fashion; but it is the fashion of a man who, kneeling on his victim and promising to stop his operations, should give the final squeeze, and then, getting up, placidly announce that those operations were concluded.

There is, therefore, absolutely no room for controversy as to the facts of the case, as far as the value of the statement by Sir CHARLES DILKE is concerned. The Candahar division, quite innocently no doubt, was as much obtained by false pretences as the surrender of Potchefstroom, or rather much more so; for Commandant CRONJE simply withheld the truth, while the informant of Sir CHARLES DILKE's informant volunteered falsehood. There is nothing in this, as we have said, in the least calculated to surprise either those who know the antecedents of the question or those who know its present state. The actual annexation of the country up to Annau is indeed not announced, though it is implied; but if it does not follow, it would be, to say the least, surprising. That the Russian Government should, merely out of affection for the *beau jeu* of the English Government, surrender a hardly won, a long desired, and, in very obvious contingencies, a most valuable possession, would be one of those "magnificent" acts of which the benighted foreigner has not hitherto realized the wisdom, though he doubtless admires them very much when they are committed by others. If ALEXANDER III. commits it, he may be more than forgiven for the somewhat awkward use which he seems to have permitted to be made of his name to suit the purposes of Mr. GLADSTONE's Government. Sir CHARLES DILKE's statement must have reached St. Petersburg by telegraph early in the evening, and there would have been almost time for it to be contradicted before the House rose, while there would have been much more than time for a contradiction to have been made at the opening of the second night of the debate. This, however, would have been equivalent to taking the trade musket back—a thing which the true dealer never thinks of doing. He may, out of the abundance of his uprightness, caution the poor savage (just as Lord HARTINGTON did) that the gun is not exactly London proof; but this is more than enough, and a great deal more than can be fairly expected. It is perfectly possible for the savage, as for the English member of Parliament, to protect himself by a slight inquiry into facts, and if both prefer to accept the facts without inquiry, they must take the consequences. On the last night of the Session Mr. GLADSTONE announced, with a proud jocularity, his opinion that honourable members opposite him "must have had enough" on the occasion of the Afghan debate. In this particular little incident it might seem to a casual observer that, not merely Mr. GLADSTONE's opponents, but his supporters, had rather more than enough, at least in the way of worthless assurances.

As, however, a Central Asian darkness—the phrase may perhaps be suggested as a useful variation on the hackneyed connexion of darkness with Egypt—seems to rest on not a few of the advisers of the public as to what actually has happened, it may be well once more, and in a very few words, to point out what General SKOBLEFF's announcement that his operations are ended really means. To the *Times* this announcement means the "abatement of anxiety," if it be not a possible subject for actual "rejoicing." Unfortunately, the reasons for this are given. So long, it seems, as operations went on, it was possible to believe that an advance on Merv, and a consequent menace to Herat, was intended. Now that operations have ceased, the fear of such a menace is, of course, removed. The writer apparently does not know that it is no more necessary for a Russian general holding what the Russians hold, and desirous of going to Herat, to go to Merv, than it would be necessary

for a French general holding Antwerp, and desirous of going to London, to go to Brest. The submission of the Akhal Tekkes, if it is attended by actual occupation of their whole country, brings the Russians within a march or two of the river on which Herat stands, and (which is more important) to the border of a fertile frontier district of Persia, through which the road to Herat by Sarakhs is easy, well watered, well provisioned, and totally free from any likelihood of resistance by independent tribes. If—which is in the last degree improbable—such actual occupation does not take place, the submission still converts the warlike nation which has so long barred the Caspian road to India into friends and dependents of Russia. It is open to any one, therefore, to say that the threatening of Herat is a matter of no importance to England; it is open to no one to say that the cessation of General SKOBELEFF'S operations does away with all menace to Herat. General SKOBELEFF has ceased operating simply because his work in this direction is done. The other claw of the vice which PASKIEWITCH'S conquests fixed half a century ago on the North-West of Persia is now firmly gripping the North-East. The Turkoman steppes are bridged; the Turkoman spirit broken. It is true that the Russians have not yet gone to Merv, but as everybody who has the slightest acquaintance with the subject knows, and as not one in ten of the persons who write about that subject seems to know, in order to go to Herat they have no need to go there. Merv is on the road to Herat from Khiva and the North, it is not on the road to it from Tchikislar and the West. If somebody would succeed in convincing our modern Dukes of NEWCASTLE of the fact that Cape Breton is an island, he would do a very good deed. We almost despair of performing the feat, but it is at least worth while once more to attempt it. There is no need here to discuss the endless questions of Russian designs on India, of the best way of meeting those designs, of the importance of this place or that place as a bulwark. The designs of Russia may be as virtuous as the statements she permits to be made about her by Sir CHARLES DILKE are inaccurate; it may be physically impossible for her to cross Afghanistan; the Indus may be the natural and impregnable fosse of the peninsula. Let it all be so for the present. But at least do not let us be told, because General SKOBELEFF says his operations are at an end, that the Russians are not within striking distance of Herat; because he is not going to Merv, that he is nowhere near Afghanistan. The exact contrary is the case. Unless the Russians relinquish the entire Akhal Tekke oasis, of which, as it appears, they have accepted the submission; unless the chiefs who have just sworn allegiance to the EMPEROR are released from that allegiance; everything of importance that they set out to gain in this quarter when they dreaded our attack in Europe has been gained by them, and every real obstacle which barred their course to Herat has been removed.

THE STATE OF PARTIES.

AT the end of the first year of his Administration Mr. GLADSTONE may console himself for some disappointments by observing that his majority in the House of Commons, and perhaps in the constituencies, is still unimpaired. During the present Session he has scarcely found it necessary to make any demand on the fidelity of his followers. Almost all of them voted for the Government through the long and tiresome struggle with the knot of obstructive Irish members; and a little section which objected to any measure for enforcing the law in Ireland did the Minister the service of retaining within his political connexion the extreme democratic faction out of doors. In the contests to which the Government is pledged the late seceders will be the most zealous adherents of Mr. GLADSTONE. The representatives of the landless classes will eagerly concur in proposals for limiting the freedom of disposal of real property, and for increasing the tax on successions. The same members will unanimously approve the extension of household suffrage to counties, in the well-founded confidence that the new-comers will swell the ranks of democratic agitation. Many Liberal members probably regard with unqualified dislike the tasks which nevertheless await them; but they fear their constituents; and there has hitherto been no occasion for a schism. Since

the meeting of Parliament there has been but one strict party division; and the issue on which it was taken offered no temptation to a breach of discipline. But few members could affect to hold independent opinions on the retention of Candahar; and it was easy to throw the responsibility of a decision on Lord HARTINGTON and his colleagues. In questions of military expediency, or of Indian policy, it would be practically impossible for the House of Commons to reverse the decision of the Government. It is possible that the minority may not have regarded with unmixed regret the certainty that it would be defeated. Accordingly, both parties stood by their colours, with the result of showing that the balance of power has not materially shifted since the general election.

That a disruption of the Liberal party impends in the not distant future is nevertheless almost too certain to be announced as a conjecture. No judicious supporter of existing institutions will desire to precipitate an almost inevitable secession. The party which may conveniently be designated by the almost obsolete name of Whig has done great service to the country both in the promotion of beneficial changes and in the restraint which it has long imposed on the zeal of more hasty reformers. It is a still greater merit of the Whig aristocracy that they have prevented the dangerous coincidence of political party lines with social divisions. The Liberal magnate renders the same service to the public good at one end of the scale which is supposed by those who believe in his existence to be performed at the other extremity by the Conservative working-man. The Whigs were the natural leaders of the great body of moderate Liberals who considered constitutional and legislative improvements as expedient, both on account of their direct operation and as the best security against revolutionary measures. As long as political contests turned on the removal of restrictions and on the gradual and limited increase of popular power, there was room for a party of Whigs or of moderate Liberals. When property is threatened, and when the absolute supremacy of numbers is likely to be established, it becomes every day more difficult for the best section of the Liberal party to share in the movement. The most remarkable indication of the uneasiness felt by Mr. GLADSTONE'S moderate supporters was to be found in the division of the House of Lords on last year's Disturbance Bill. The measure, though it was zealously pressed by the Government, would have been defeated by a majority of Liberals, if the Conservatives had abstained from voting. Two of the most eminent supporters of the Bill, the Duke of ARGYLL and Lord DERBY, delivered powerful arguments against its principle, while they justified or excused their votes in its favour by reasons of immediate and temporary convenience. Both of them may, perhaps unconsciously, have been influenced by political motives. Lord DERBY was probably unwilling to vote on the first opportunity against the party to which he had openly, if not ostentatiously, proclaimed his adhesion at the general election. The Duke of ARGYLL might well be excused if he placed some strain on his convictions for the purpose of avoiding or postponing his separation from his colleagues and his leader.

The painful sacrifice of personal feeling and of political prospects can now be no longer deferred. A sincere believer in economic science, or rather in its fundamental assumption, has found it impossible to support a measure which, as he said, places ownership in commission or abeyance. The objection was, he added, fundamental in its character, and it affects more or less directly several of the leading proposals of the Government. Although the Irish Land Bill, like the less violent measure of 1870, is justified on the ground of exceptional circumstances, Radical politicians loudly declare that the same principle is to be applied to England and Scotland. It may be added that other kinds of property are seriously threatened. Several witnesses before the Committee on railway rates have boldly expressed the opinion that the Parliamentary tariffs of Railway Companies ought to be summarily reduced. The Duke of ARGYLL is only the first of many who will drop out of the ranks of the party during the accelerated progress of innovation. Of all Mr. GLADSTONE'S followers, the Duke of ARGYLL has been perhaps the most cordial and most faithful. In Lord PALMERSTON'S days, it was known that Mr. GLADSTONE'S influence in the Cabinet had little proportion to the weight which he already possessed in the House of Commons and the country. In

his frequent differences with his colleagues, he was believed to have no supporter but the Duke of ARGYLL. At a later period the DUKE concurred without any public display of reluctance in the sweeping measures of Mr. GLADSTONE's first Administration, including the Irish Land Bill of 1870. The impetuous leader of the Liberal party has cause for serious reflection in a separation which is undoubtedly painful to both.

Hath he so long held on with me untired,
And doth he now take breath?

The remaining members of the Cabinet have persuaded themselves that the anomalies which some of them cannot but fully recognize must be overlooked under the pressure of urgent necessity. If the Land Bill passes without material change, the theories which it involves will soon find fresh application.

The appointment of Lord CARLINGFORD to fill the vacancy in the Cabinet is natural and judicious. No member of the Government will be better qualified to aid in the Ministerial deliberations which will coincide with the discussion in the House of Commons; and probably Lord CARLINGFORD will take a prominent part in the House of Lords debates. The LORD CHANCELLOR, to whom the conduct of the measure will probably be entrusted, will be the better able to conciliate the peers because he will sympathize with many of their scruples and objections. Lord CARLINGFORD, who knows Ireland better, belonging himself to a family of landowners, will command attention when he explains the reasons which induce many members of his own class to welcome almost any settlement of a dangerous controversy. Mr. GLADSTONE himself has perhaps been actuated by a desire to save something for the landowners as well as by anxiety to satisfy popular demands. The Duke of ARGYLL resigned because he thought suppression of freedom of contract injurious both to landlord and tenant. Lord CARLINGFORD accepts office in the persuasion that an arbitrary compromise is better than a continuance of agrarian agitation. As it was said of the Peace of Amiens, nobody can be proud of the settlement, but some may perhaps be glad. It is not to be expected that any Liberal member of the House of Commons will follow the example of the Duke of ARGYLL by dissenting from the Land Bill. As long as it is the subject of debate the majority will be unbroken, though some members of the petty faction which opposed the Protection Bill may affect to regret the absence of still more stringent provisions for the spoliation of landowners. Even Mr. PARNELL's followers will shrink from the responsibility of rejecting large concessions, though they will reserve to themselves the right of demanding more hereafter. The most anxious period of the Session will arrive when the Bill is introduced into the House of Lords. The guidance under which the former Land Bill and the Irish Church Bill were allowed to pass into law will be unfortunately suspended or withdrawn. It may be hoped that those who remain will follow the precedents of 1869 and 1870. There is no hope of substituting a more moderate measure for the Ministerial Bill; and the delay of a year would be probably attended with violence and anarchy. Even in Lord DERBY's cynical and impolitic confessions of the inability of the House of Lords to resist popular demands, there is an element of truth which deserves consideration, though it may be presented in a distasteful form.

THE BANKRUPTCY BILL.

SESSION after Session we have been told by the Government of the day, and year after year we have been told by all persons practically acquainted with trade, that the existing Bankruptcy law is a disgrace to the country, and gives rise to almost incredible scandals. Every year some solemn attempt has been made to remedy the evil, and every year has witnessed a new failure in legislation. Now Mr. CHAMBERLAIN has made a new attempt. He has once more told us the old stories of fraud and misconduct. It is impossible they should move us much, for we have heard them so often before. The tidings of a new Bankruptcy Bill no longer rouse in us indignation, but only a mournful wonder whether one more failure is or is not to be put on the long list. This time there is a slight gleam of new hope. It looks as if the Bill might possibly be seriously meant, and as if it might be really got through Parliament. This is not

because the Bill is a better Bill than its predecessors. It may be a better Bill or it may not; but its merits have scarcely anything to do with its prospects. It is simply because Mr. CHAMBERLAIN brings it in that it has a chance of success. Lord CAIRNS did his very best to reform the bankruptcy law, and no one could have been a better judge as to how it ought to be reformed. Lord CAIRNS knows law, he knows business, and he has plenty of courage. He was exactly the man to draft a Bankruptcy Bill, but he was not the man to carry it. No one in the House of Lords can carry such a Bill. To carry it there is needed some one who can not only bring it before the House of Commons, but make the House of Commons attend to it; and it is very difficult to get the House of Commons to attend to a matter so complicated and so uninteresting, and with which most men are so unfamiliar, as bankruptcy. It is impossible to say that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN will get a chance this Session of making the House attend to his Bill; but it may be safely said that, if Mr. CHAMBERLAIN gets a chance, he will make the House attend to it. This Bill has prospects which other Bankruptcy Bills have not had, because it is in the hands of a pushing man, and his first and best chance of pushing himself is to carry this Bill. He has an opportunity of showing what is in him, and of justifying his very rapid rise in the ranks of his party. And what very greatly improves the prospects of the Bill is that he is not the sort of man to let his colleagues smother his Bill if he can help it. The harmony of the Cabinet would be broken if a Bill brought in by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, associated with his name, justifying his advancement, and opening for him an avenue to fame, was suffered to die the easy death of a Vaccination Bill. It has often been a subject of controversy whether we ought to think most of men or of measures. The dispute is an idle one in these days, because we have found out that there are no such things as measures without men. A Bill may be the embodiment of human wisdom on the subject with which it deals, but whether it is born to die or to live depends entirely on the hands in which it is placed. This Bankruptcy Bill differs from other Bankruptcy Bills of recent years, because it alone seems born to live.

There are two leading evils in our present bankruptcy system. Every one admits them and every one deploras them. They are easy to specify and not very difficult to deal with. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's Bill goes far to remedy them, but so has every Bankruptcy Bill which has been proposed since the greatness of these evils was brought to light. Under the present system the wrong kind of persons are made trustees; when they are made, they behave in the wrong way; and, what is peculiarly aggravating, they make enormous sums of money out of their misbehaviour. They are appointed by collusion, they manage the estate only to rob it, and they keep their plunder, enjoy it, and spend it without ever being brought to account for what they have done. Every one who knows anything of bankruptcy knows how it has happened that such an absurd state of things has come into existence. The Bill of 1869 proceeded on the assumption that the trustee would be an active and important creditor, whose only thought would be how to get in all that could be got in for himself and the other creditors. In practice it has been found that active and important creditors will not trouble themselves about the estates of these bankrupt debtors. They write off the debt as bad and have done with it. As the creditors will not interest themselves in the matter, the bankrupt has it all his own way. In his hour of distress he has one supreme consolation. He has a lucrative piece of patronage in his gift, and he gives it to the man who can best give him what he wants in return—a comfortable, speedy, and honourable whitewashing. The trustee starts the bankrupt clear; and the bankrupt, who has done with his old estate, prefers his useful friend to his creditors, and presents him with the estate. The chief aims of a Bankruptcy Bill are, therefore, to spoil this game, to keep a tight hold over the trustee, and to make the path to whitewashing straight and narrow. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's Bill has several ingenious provisions for turning the trustee's bed of roses into a bed of thorns. Before the trustee is appointed, an official is to take charge of the estate for a time long enough to give him a fair idea of the mode in which a trustee who meant to rob would set to work. The Court is to control the choice of the trustee. The payment of the trustee is to be made according to a schedule, and all the trustee

realizes is to be paid into the Bank of England. Watched by an official who has been behind the scenes, always liable to be removed, paid a pittance, and divested of his money, the trustee of the future will, it must be owned, be entirely different from the trustee of the past and present.

The bankrupt is to be taken care of; that is, his past conduct is to be scrutinized, and if necessary punished, by a body of watchful officials, who in London will be under the supervision of a new first-class judge, full of commercial law and a member of the High Court. That the trustee and the bankrupt will be well looked after under Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S Bill is incontestable, but so they would have been under the scheme elaborated by Lord CAIRNS. What is really new in Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S scheme is that this wholesome supervision is to be exercised by an army of officials, and these officials are to be appointed or guided by the Board of Trade. Very much officialism, and that officialism commercial, not legal, is Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S contribution to the novelties of bankruptcy law. Under his scheme the penetrating power of officialism will be very great. Nominally it is only of very small estates that officials are to take permanent charge, a trustee being supposed to be appointed for larger estates. But who will want to be a trustee? A serious creditor who even now prefers to write off his loss is not likely to be tempted to activity by the prospect of being watched at every turn, humbly paid, and made to pay over and account for every penny. A friend of the bankrupt will have no opportunity of befriending him by accepting the office. No one who is otherwise busy will think of encumbering himself with a thankless burden. The trustees will be outsiders, who take to a calling that promises them an honest, but anxious and humble, livelihood. They will be like so many more officials, and it is not obvious why the creditors should trouble themselves to appoint a semi-official outsider as trustee rather than retain in office the official who would look exactly like his twin brother. Thus the end and beginning of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S Bill is officialism. This used to be the basis of bankruptcy in old times, and it was abandoned because it was found that, under the reign of officialism, nothing moved forward. The system of checks and counter-checks was so admirable that the machinery refused to go at all. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN replies that this was because the secret of the true motive-force had not been discovered. The propulsive powers of the Board of Trade had not been demonstrated. The Board of Trade is so full of life and movement that it can make others live and move. And if it is asked how we are to know that this is so, and how we are to satisfy ourselves that this particular Government office is so unlike other Government offices, memory must take us back to the days of Mr. PLIMSOLL. That agitated person, when his mind was rent by the thought of an over-loaded vessel being suddenly sent to sea, proved practically that it was possible to ring up the Board of Trade in the middle of the night. This recollection ought to cheer creditors, and they may feel less dread of the procrastination of officialism if they can but rely on making Mr. CHAMBERLAIN or his successors turn out of bed in case the assets of a bankrupt are not being properly got in or distributed.

FRANCE AND TUNIS.

THE debate in the French Chambers on the Tunis expedition was of so very poor and party a character that it could not possibly throw any light on the intentions of the French Government or the wishes of the French people. It was a mere railing of Bonapartists against Republicans; and when the Bonapartist protested that he could not bear the thought of a new Mexican expedition for the sake of new sections, the comedy of political hypocrisy could go no further. M. JULES FERRY stated that the object of the expedition was to punish the Kroumirs, and also to take such further measures as the safety of Algeria might seem to demand. The Chamber, confiding in the prudence and the energy of the Government, passed to the order of the day. The majority of the Chamber, in other language, trusted that the Government would not get France into a scrape, but also trusted that the Government would not put France to the expense of a costly expedition without being able to show something for the money. All the world finds it very natural and very innocent in France to

put down the Kroumirs if she thinks it worth her while to do so. They are very disagreeable neighbours to the French in Algeria; they have committed an outrage deserving exemplary punishment; and, as the BEY most certainly could not put them down if he would, and would not if he could, France is at perfect liberty to act for herself. It may cost France some little trouble to do the work she has taken on her, for the Kroumirs are only one of the wild tribes occupying the borderland between Algeria and Tunis; and the French, in attacking one of these tribes, will probably find it both necessary and convenient to attack all. The country is wild and difficult, and it is only as it nears the sea that it has any value as a possession. But, whether it is worth having or not in itself, it may be expected that France will feel obliged to take it. It is always difficult to keep wild tribes down by inflicting on them casual punishment. It is still more difficult in this case to have any assurance that the borderland will not be the cause of endless quarrels between France and the BEY, unless France brings him into permanent subjection; and, lastly, France has had granted to her, and will insist on keeping, an easy line of communication between Algeria and the capital of Tunis, and this line necessarily passes through the borderland. The annexation of the borderland will no doubt cost a considerable amount of money; it may cost as much or more not to annex it; and the French Government will have to decide on which side the balance of advantage lies. When the tribes are put down and their territory annexed, or not annexed, as France may decide, the turn of the BEY will come. At first the BEY thought that he might do exactly as he pleased. He felt sure that either Europe would combine to warn France not to meddle in his affairs, or that, if he wanted to offer active opposition to France, he would have the support of at least one European friend. An Italian army protecting him by land and an English fleet protecting him by sea was the beautiful dream which the BEY cherished when he first had to consider what he would do. He found that no English fleet and no Italian army would come to his help. He was summoned by France to send troops to assist in the work of putting down the Kroumirs. What he might perhaps have liked to do was to send the tiny force he commands to help the Kroumirs. But this, when left to his own resources, he had not dared to do. He has therefore chosen one of those halfway courses which commend themselves to feeble minds or feeble sovereigns. He has despatched a small body of troops to the frontier. They are to go there as slowly as possible, and when they get there they are to look on, assisting neither France nor the Kroumirs. The probable end will be that France, when it has given the Kroumirs the lesson they need, will call him to account.

When the BEY is called to account, and, in the language of M. JULES FERRY, such measures are taken with regard to him as the interests of Algeria demand, the question may arise whether the limit of these measures is to be solely the good sense of France, or whether they are to be bounded by the supervising influence of other Powers. Mysterious rumours have been afloat that, at any rate, England could not be one of these Powers, as she was bound by a secret compact with France to let her do in Tunis whatever she might think fit. Lord SALISBURY was said to have pledged England to this effect, and to have pledged her so solemnly and so tightly that there was no escape from the engagement. There were, however, two things to be observed as to this reported convention. In the first place, Lord SALISBURY, who must have known what he had said and written, persistently denied that he had ever made any such engagement. In the next place, the present Government, having looked into the matter, and being in possession of the secrets of the Foreign Office, were clearly of opinion that England had not been committed. They felt free to act as they thought best, and authorized the Italian PRIME MINISTER to say that they were not in any way fettered. The Paris Correspondent of the *Times* took this as a kind of challenge to himself. Lord SALISBURY and Sir CHARLES DILKE and Signor CAIROLI all seemed to have forgotten him. He would show them that he was not to be overlooked. He knew the great secret, and could tell it to the world. Accordingly, he published a reproduction of a letter from Lord SALISBURY to M. WADDINGTON written in 1878. He had only once seen the letter a long time ago, but his faith-

ful memory enabled him to give it word for word. It seems a very improper thing that a confidential despatch from the English Foreign Office should be communicated to a newspaper Correspondent, and that it should be so communicated that he feels at liberty to publish it to the world at any time, near or distant, when he fancies its production would do him credit. But, although it is extremely improper that the Correspondent should have been in a position to publish this letter, it is not altogether inconvenient that it should have been published just now. It sometimes saves trouble to get rid of a mare's nest once for all. If the Correspondent's memory serves him, Lord SALISBURY wrote in 1878, repeating the substance of a conversation held at Berlin, that England had not any special interests in Tunis which would lead her to watch with jealousy that growing influence of France which naturally arose from the possession of Algeria; and that, even if the Government of the BEY fell, the attitude of England would not be changed. Subsequently Lord SALISBURY wrote to the BEY, strongly urging him not to give France any good ground of offence. Lord SALISBURY evidently meant, what was perfectly true, that England has no special interests in Tunis, as she has in Egypt, to make her claim an equal right with France to approach the BEY in that peculiar manner in which all European Powers approach the Porte, and every vassal of the Porte, when they want to get anything done. If France, in the protection of its legitimate interests, found it necessary to do what both Powers did a little later in Egypt, and bring about the fall of the BEY's Government, England would no more interfere to save the BEY than Germany or Austria did to save the KHEDIVÉ. There was not a word said about annexation, or about what was to be the final form of French influence. Lord SALISBURY was not invited to discuss, and did not discuss, any such remote contingencies. All he was asked to say was, whether England claimed any special interests in Tunis which would make her consider French interference in Tunis as directed against her; and Lord SALISBURY being asked the question, and wishing to oblige the French Government, answered, with perfect accuracy, that England had no special interests. It would have been as much open to him the next day as it is to Lord GRANVILLE now to point out to France, if France was about to take any decisive step, that the moment was not a right one, or that what was proposed was liable to misconstruction, or that it would lay France open to great embarrassments in the future.

Italy has chosen a curious, but characteristic, manner of getting out of the difficulty in which she was placed by the impossibility of her doing anything, and by the national passion demanding that something should have been done. A Ministerial crisis worked off the excitement of the moment, and Signor CAIROLI fell for not having done something which none of his opponents could explain to him. He asked for explanations from France, and was told that France was going to punish the Kroumirs, and that this was her business, and not the business of Italy. He asked for explanations from England, and was told that England was quite free to make any recommendations to France that she thought advisable. There was nothing more to be done. But the Italians were in that state of nervous irritation in which men cannot settle down into peacefulness unless they have hurt some one. They looked out for some one to hurt; Signor CAIROLI was in the way, and so they hurt him. They were like sportsmen who have had a long tramp and have found nothing to shoot abroad, and so determined to close a day of idleness and annoyance by killing a tame rabbit at home. It does not seem much of a triumph; but, before we condemn or ridicule the Italians, we may remember how very near a parallel we offered when we sacrificed Lord PALMERSTON in order to work off our indignation at the French colonels. As it happens, the Italians have gained in an unexpected way by displacing Signor CAIROLI. There is no possible Government to take his place. There is no one to criticize, to remonstrate, or to combine while France is acting. No one can be blamed for doing, or not doing, this or that, for there is no one to blame. Meanwhile, the French have had time to reflect over what they are doing, and the more they look at it, the less they like it. They see the pitfall they are digging for themselves by becoming too much of an African power. They are beginning to talk of the annexation of

Tunis as if it had never been proposed by any but lunatics. Their views of a protectorate are getting gradually more and more modest. The good sense and perhaps it may be added, the nervousness of the French are the best safeguards against the execution of wild and dangerous schemes. They even like the work of punishing the Kroumirs less than they did. To that, however, they are committed, and that they must carry out. But they are addressing themselves to their task in a frame of mind which is calculated to relieve the apprehensions of those who fancied that France was about to set on foot a new reign of trouble and disturbance.

ARMY DISCIPLINE.

THE Lords brought the first part of the Session to a close with the moan which in ordinary years is not heard until August is nigh at hand. It must be admitted, however, that there was some ground for this particular complaint. When they are asked to sit on a Wednesday in April, they naturally feel that they are being hurried. Moreover, the question was one on which they had an unusually good right not to be hurried. A House which, as Lord CHELMSFORD pointed out, has in it so many officers, including the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, ought to be given a little time for discussing a Bill which gravely affects the maintenance of discipline in the army. It may be observed, however, that their lordships were not specially anxious to make the most of the time actually allowed them. Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL showed a well-founded sense of the difficulty of keeping a House beyond dinner-time, when he suggested that on the day when the Bill was to be put through Committee they should meet at four o'clock instead of five. As all the Opposition leaders were away, it was held impossible to take this course, there being seemingly no reasonable ground for believing that peers who are not present at debates read the morning papers, or have any recognized means of learning what takes place in their own House. When the day came, however, it turned out that they had time, not only to pass the Army Discipline Bill through Committee, and read it a third time; but to discuss at some length three other questions, and get away, after all, by twenty minutes to eight. It appears, therefore, that the military element in the House either had not very much to say or was content not to say it.

On the whole, perhaps, it was best not to debate the Army Discipline Bill at greater length. When the House of Commons makes up its mind to abolish flogging against the opinion of military experts, there is no way of preventing it. Lord DENMAN, indeed, moved an amendment by which flogging would have been retained, and even tried to tempt the House to adopt it by the prospect of a conference. But even a conference seems to have lost its charms. Perhaps the formalities which accompany it have too plainly ceased to be anything but formalities to be any longer pleasant to go through. The real state of the case was described by the Duke of CAMBRIDGE with that cynical common-sense which sometimes characterizes the speeches of Royal personages. The COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF is equally convinced of the impossibility of finding a substitute for flogging and of the impossibility of continuing to flog. He knows of no other means of dealing with bad characters in a summary and effective manner; but at the same time he sees that there is "a strong public feeling against the use of the lash," and that being so, he thinks it best to try to find a substitute for it. It is a curious tribute to Mr. CHILDEES's new punishments that in neither House have they been thought worthy of serious discussion. The truth probably is that no one believes that they will ever be inflicted. War cannot go on if one half the army is to be employed in guarding the other half. The COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF did not even pay them the compliment of a passing mention. He treated the discovery of a substitute for flogging as an event altogether future. What will happen will probably be something of this kind. The discipline of the army when in the field will get worse and worse, until at length it becomes so bad as seriously to impair the efficiency of the force and imperil the chances of ultimate success. If a resolute and capable officer is then in command, he will restore flogging, and take the consequences. No doubt if he is defeated, those consequences will be unpleasant. He will be censured by the military authorities, be debarred from all chance of

future employment, and perhaps be subjected to prosecutions for assault on the part of the men whom he has flogged. Victory, on the other hand, will hold him harmless against these dangers. If Sir FREDERICK ROBERTS had found it necessary to resort to flogging on the march from Cabul to Candahar, it is not likely that much would have been heard of it when he came home. An instance of this kind is given in the *Times* of Tuesday. We there learn that when Standerton was besieged by the Boers Major MONTAGU found it necessary at the outset "to use the cat on occasion; but when the men found that they had a master-hand over them all went smoothly and well. The strictest discipline was maintained, and all co-operated in this "most gallant defence." It would be interesting to know Major MONTAGU's opinion as to how things would have gone if the masterhand had not had the cat within reach. If, on the other hand, the officer in command is not resolute and capable, he will go on with the inadequate punishments which he is permitted to inflict until such time as his demonstrated unfitness for his post brings about his recall. Unfortunately this recall may not be determined on until the time for averting disaster has passed away.

There is, indeed, another possibility, and that is, that officers will resort to penalties which are really cruel, though in form they do not go beyond the prescribed limits of punishment. Even the absurd provisions about making a man move after a horse or a waggon at a walking pace, or carry extra burdens, or sit in irons, might easily be carried out in a way which would cause acute suffering. If a man is tied to a horse of an uncertain temper, he may never be forced to go beyond a walking pace; but he may take every step in terror of his life. If a man is fastened to a waggon, the soldiers in charge of it may have no instructions as to noticing his stumbles, and on bad ground he may easily fall and be dragged some distance before it suits them to make the discovery. It is not likely perhaps that discipline of this kind will be resorted to in the English army, but it is said to be not unknown in other armies, and when great things have to be done with bad instruments, even English officers may be induced to try experiments to which, in cold blood, they would never resort. Unfortunately, if this should happen, the additional suffering caused will fall on the wrong men. The bad characters of the army will not have clamoured for the abolition of flogging, but it will be they who will pay the penalty. The persons who ought to bear the extra pain are the humanitarians who have insisted on superseding a punishment which, as administered of late years, was not cruel, by punishments which, if they are to be effective at all, must be made cruel. It would have greatly tended to the diffusion of sound opinion on this question if the opponents of flogging could have been tied for a few minutes to a kicking horse, or put in irons which are accidentally a little tight, or made to carry a cannon ball or two under an unusually broiling sun, with a guard with fixed bayonets charged to take care that the prisoner does not loiter on the road.

For some months to come it will remain quite uncertain whether any substitute for flogging is to be provided, or whether, when a crime hitherto punishable with flogging has been committed, the offender will be left to public opinion, or to his own conscience, or to some other imaginary sanction. The new rules cannot, it seems, be framed in two months, since "communications will have to be sent to officers abroad in order to ascertain their opinion as to the best substitutes for corporal punishment." It turns out, therefore, that the Government have done away with flogging, not when, but before, they have satisfied themselves that it is possible to find something to put in its place. It would have been more decent if Mr. CHILDERS had waited until these communications from officers abroad had been received. It would have been more frank if he had admitted that the Government were going to abolish flogging whether a substitute was found for it or not. It is plain, from what has been said about the new rules, that the military authorities are not in the least satisfied that irons, or tying to the cart's tail, or carrying heavy extra weights, or any other of the punishments which, by a pleasing fiction, are supposed not to "degrade" those on whom they are inflicted, will answer the purpose hitherto served by the cat. These proposals merely indicate the direction which, as at present advised, they intend their researches

to take. In the meantime the mischief is to be done on the chance that some day or other a remedy may be found for it. The Radicals want a plaything, and the discipline of the army must at once be put into their innocent hands.

AMERICAN POLITICS.

MR. GARFIELD has found by early experience, or perhaps he already knew, that the President's chair is not a bed of roses. It is true that he has no tragic reverses to apprehend, for the actual injury to public interests and the inconvenience to himself are not of an overwhelming character; but it is mortifying to come into immediate collision with the checks and drawbacks which limit the opportunities of a great position. As a veteran manager of elections and political combinations, Mr. GARFIELD is probably not taken by surprise. If he hoped to be independent of allies and rivals, he only shares the disappointment which awaited many of his predecessors on their accession to office. General GRANT, after his first election, was compelled to dispense with the services of the Ministers whom he had deliberately selected. From that time forward he submitted to the control of the Republican leaders in the Senate, who share with the President the responsibility of many discreditable appointments. Mr. GARFIELD's Cabinet nominations have been approved by the Senate; but he has since found himself committed to a troublesome feud arising out of a question of patronage. Mr. CONKLING, Senator for New York and a principal leader of the Republican party, was defeated in his efforts to obtain for General GRANT the nomination at Chicago; but it is the custom to distribute offices among the different sections of the majority; and Mr. CONKLING perhaps thought that his claims on the President were strengthened by the promotion of his rival, Mr. BLAINE, to the highest Cabinet office. Jointly with his less known colleague, Mr. PLATT, Mr. CONKLING considered that he had a right to dispose of the State offices in New York; and it seems that the President so far acknowledged the justice of the demand as to discuss with the New York Senators the pretensions of certain candidates. He nevertheless, without further consultation, appointed certain lawyers as attorneys for the districts of the State; and it seems that he gave additional offence by preferring nominees who were considered followers of Mr. CONKLING, though they were not in the present instance dependent on his patronage. It must have been provoking for Mr. CONKLING to receive congratulations on supposed proofs of his influence while the Senator himself was aware that he had taken no share in the appointments. While Mr. CONKLING was nursing his indignation, he was exposed to a severer shock by the nomination of a certain Mr. ROBERTSON to the place of Collector of the Port of New York. The office is the most lucrative in the Union; and, with the exception of seats in the Cabinet and of two or three diplomatic posts, it is regarded as the most considerable place in the gift of the President. The outgoing Collector is supposed to be but insufficiently consoled for his dismissal by the valuable office of Consul-General in England. In the controversy which has arisen, nothing is said of Mr. ROBERTSON's qualifications for the discharge of his important duties. It is more to the purpose to observe that, in local politics, at the Chicago Convention he has been a determined opponent of Mr. CONKLING. The President is accused of having yielded to the influence of Mr. BLAINE; and comparatively impartial Republicans complain that the appointment will have created a split in the party. Nevertheless both Houses of the New York State Legislature have passed resolutions in approval of the President's choice, in spite of the charges that the Democrats will at the next State elections profit by the schism in the Republican ranks.

The nomination of Mr. ROBERTSON still lies on the table of the Senate, where it is understood that Mr. CONKLING will use his utmost efforts to defeat his appointment. The trial of strength with the President or with the Secretary of State is delayed by a contest between the two great parties for the control of the Senate, which involves the appointment of its officers. At the meeting of Congress the Republicans and the Democrats were thought to be equally matched; but the balance has since been shifted by the accession to the Republican party of a Mr. MAHONE,

who had been elected Senator for Virginia as a Democrat. In their indignation at his apostasy the Democrats are indulging in obstructive practices after the American fashion; and until they are finally defeated no business can be done. The Republicans, though they cannot afford to repel their new ally, are not proud of his adhesion. Mr. MAHONE is said to owe his election to negro support; and so far the Republicans are pledged to approve his pretensions; but he is also the champion of readjustment, which, in the political dialect of Virginia, means partial repudiation of the State debt. The professed advocates of national good faith cannot afford to discredit themselves by connivance at schemes for defrauding State creditors; but, on the whole, they are perhaps not dissatisfied with the advantages which they derive from MAHONE's questionable proceedings. When the officers of the Senate are appointed, the nomination to the Collectorship of New York will be considered in secret session. As the Republicans will be divided, the decision will rest with the Democrats, who will have to choose between the triumph of thwarting the PRESIDENT and the pleasure of disappointing Mr. CONKLING. Either result would be agreeable to a party in Opposition, which has in any case the opportunity of annoying one section of its adversaries. It probably matters little, except to the nominee, or to the candidate who may be substituted if he is rejected by the Senate, whether Mr. ROBERTSON or another functionary collects duties at New York; but the struggle for patronage between the PRESIDENT and the leaders of the Senate attracts general interest. In former times appointments made by the President were, if they were in themselves unobjectionable, approved as a matter of course by the Senate. In Mr. ANDREW JOHNSON's incumbency, the quarrel, which finally resulted in the impeachment of the President, induced the Senate habitually to reject his nominations. General GRANT, though he had the Presidency in view, supported the dominant party in every attempt to limit Mr. JOHNSON's power. The independence of the President in the disposal of patronage has not since been resumed. Politicians favour the assumption by the Senate of a control over nominations as a security for strict adherence to party lists. Those who are not mixed up with the business of politics would be rather disposed to lean to the President, who may be reasonably expected to consider personal fitness for office. Like several of his predecessors, Mr. GARFIELD announced in his inaugural address a desire to render the Civil Service independent of party. Mr. CONKLING's success would reaffirm the popular doctrine that office should be treated as a reward for party services. New York politicians apparently incline to the side of Mr. CONKLING, in the fear that a dispute with the PRESIDENT may impair the local influence of the party.

The issues which are involved in the contest seem to foreigners trivial, but unfamiliar political customs ought not to be treated with hasty contempt. It is the peculiar felicity of the United States that American citizens can afford to occupy themselves with controversies which may be decided either way without serious political disadvantage. It is much better that a legislative body should be at leisure to amuse itself with a question of petty patronage than that, like the English Parliament, it should be employed on measures which go to the root of the doctrine of property. The Customs' duties of New York will be collected whether Mr. BLAINE or Mr. CONKLING gains an advantage over a rival. In the meantime, the country enjoys unbounded and growing prosperity; and one Secretary of the Treasury after another is enabled to announce large and rapid reductions of the National Debt. Almost exempt from domestic anxieties, the United States are also happy in the non-existence or trivial importance of foreign relations. There is, indeed, always a diplomatic squabble with England or with Canada; and the Secretary of State has the opportunity of indulging in patriotic protests and threats; but it is highly improbable that for an indefinite time America should be engaged in any serious quarrel. The Republic is perhaps already the strongest of political communities; and its population and resources are constantly increasing. The Government of the country is perhaps not theoretically perfect, but the results are, on the whole, satisfactory. It is a proof of the excellence of a machine that it can be regulated and superintended without the exercise of extraordinary skill. It is because the Americans manage their own affairs, both individually, and in townships, counties, and States, that

they can afford to suspend the functions of central legislation and administration while Mr. MAHONE passes from one party to another, and during the conflict between the PRESIDENT and a dissatisfied Senator. Politicians can even afford to pay transient attention to the grievance of an Attorney-General who complains that he is saddled by the PRESIDENT with a colleague as Solicitor-General who has not the good fortune to enjoy his confidence. Readers of provincial papers will recognize the prevalence of personal and local controversies of exactly the same kind in country towns. The national affairs of a European State are more exciting, and perhaps more dignified; but they may perhaps not indicate a sounder condition of society. The country which has no history is said to be fortunate; and the nearest approximation to such a state of things is the occupation of rulers and Parliaments with questions of parochial magnitude. The unconfirmed Collector of New York is a symbol of political security.

THE POLICE OF PARIS.

THE Municipal Council of Paris and the Government of the Republic have lately been at issue on the merits of the PREFECT of POLICE. The affair began by a demand for an interpellation as to the safety of the streets, addressed to the Municipal Council on the 19th of March. M. ANDRIEU, who was present at the sitting of the Council, denied the right of the Municipality to question in any way the police administration of the city. The Council paid no attention to this protest, and fixed the debate for the 22nd. When that day came, a letter was read from M. ANDRIEU, declining to take any notice of what might be done in regard to the interpellation. The Municipal Council thereupon passed an order of the day declaring that, in refusing to answer an interpellation, the PREFECT of POLICE had failed in the duties of his office, and that M. ANDRIEU's administration did not afford the necessary guarantee for the security of Paris. On the 28th this order of the day was annulled by the Government as being in excess of the powers of the Council; and on the following day a new order was voted, in which the Council regretted that the relations between the Prefect of Police and the City of Paris were incompatible with the proper administration of municipal affairs, and pressed on the Government the impossibility of allowing this unfortunate state of things to continue. From that time till the beginning of this week Paris was divided into two camps—those who wished the Government to treat the question as merely a personal one, and to either dismiss or obtain the resignation of M. ANDRIEU; and those who wished them to limit still further the powers now possessed by the Municipality. On Monday the controversy came to a head. An interpellation was brought forward by M. PASCAL DUPRAT, representing the deputies of the Seine, in which the Government was called on to dismiss M. ANDRIEU and so restore peace to the capital. In replying to this demand, the MINISTER of the INTERIOR said that, though it was impossible to grant it, the Government agreed with the authors of the interpellation that things could not be left in their present state. The Government would not dismiss M. ANDRIEU, but they would take measures to prevent any further conflict between the Prefect of Police and the Municipal Council. In future, if the Bill they propose to bring in should become law, the Prefect of Police will be entirely subordinate to the Minister of the Interior. The Municipal Council will no longer have anything to do either with him or with the police under his orders. As the capital will thus be deprived of the control of its own police, it will be only fair that it should no longer pay for it. The Police Estimates will consequently be transferred from the Budget of the Municipality to that of the State. An attempt was made to get an order of the day passed which might be represented as condemning by anticipation the Government Bill, but when put to the vote it was defeated by 354 votes against 65.

As things have actually turned out, the incident is not of much importance. But at one time it seemed possible that it might end in a way which would have made it very important indeed. Beneath all these expressions of the wish that the Government and the Municipality should swear eternal friendship over the body of M. ANDRIEU an important principle lay hid. If the

Government had dismissed M. ANDRIEU in consequence of a hostile vote in the Municipal Council, they would in effect have made the PREFECT of POLICE responsible to the Municipality. They could not have sent one Prefect about his business because he did not enjoy the confidence of the Municipality, and then have appointed another without ascertaining that he was likely to be more fortunate. In point of fact, the Minister of the Interior would have nominated the Prefect of Police, just as the President nominates the members of the Cabinet; but he would have been just as much bound to choose a Prefect agreeable to the Municipal Council as the President is bound to choose a Cabinet agreeable to the Chamber of Deputies. The deputies of Paris were perfectly aware of this consequence. It suited their purpose to treat the question as purely personal, but they knew that the issue involved in it was much more than personal. They hoped, probably, that the Government would be induced to go along with them by the apparent simplicity of the solution they proposed. Here, they said, is a case of a wrong-headed man who has quarrelled with the very people he ought to make it his business to get on with. There is no need to raise any question about the respective rights of the Prefect of the Police and the Municipality. But for M. ANDRIEU this quarrel would never have arisen, and if he is made to give place to a more conciliatory successor, it will be at once laid to rest. With a new Prefect of Police nothing more will be heard of these general principles which have been so needlessly dragged into the discussion. The question will be reduced to its proper dimensions, and will then be seen to affect nothing more serious than the popularity of a particular official.

Fortunately for their subsequent comfort, the Government did not allow themselves to be taken in by this ingenious reasoning. It is quite true that, if they had dismissed M. ANDRIEU, the ground of contention with the Municipality would have been removed, and for the time the Council would probably have been wise enough not to push their victory any further. But M. ANDRIEU's successor would perfectly have understood that he was made Prefect on the understanding that he was, above all things, to keep on good terms with the Municipal Council. Though he would not have been responsible to it in name, he would have been responsible in fact. He would have been liable to be dismissed by the Government whenever he happened to displease the Council; while he would certainly have been retained in office provided that he contrived to satisfy the Council. From this it would not have been a very long step to a change which should have placed the appointment of the Prefect of Police in the hands of the Municipal Council. If he was their servant, why should not they have the selection of him? For form's sake, perhaps, the Government might have been given a veto on the Council's choice; but when all the candidates for a post are virtually of one way of thinking, very little is to be gained by a mere veto. If the control of the Paris police had been made over to the Municipal Council, a great many Frenchmen would have thought that the Commune had come again. Nor would they have been very far wrong. If the Commune itself had not come again, the materials for its creation would once more have been brought together. It is quite inconsistent with the good government of a city like Paris that its police should be under the control of the Municipality. In no great capital would such an arrangement be safe. The police of the City of London are subject to the Corporation, but then the City proper is but a fraction of London, and the Metropolitan police are subject to the Home Secretary. The capital is the seat of government, the place in which the members of the Legislature and the officials who compose the Executive are all brought together, and the central Government is bound to take precautions to ensure their personal safety and their political and administrative independence. What is true of all great capitals is true in an especial manner of Paris, for Paris, unlike other great capitals, lives in a state of perpetual hostility to the Government for the time being. So long as the Legislature sat at Versailles, and the Executive could at any moment be transferred thither, this fact was comparatively unimportant; but, now that the Chambers have been brought to Paris, Paris must accept the necessary drawbacks of the position it has regained. In the past the Legislature and the Government have too often

been merely hostages in the hands of the people of Paris; and it is the first business of the Government to take care that nothing of the kind shall happen again. With the police of the city under the control of the Minister of the Interior, and no National Guards to form a nucleus of insurrection, the relative strengths of Paris and France will be reversed, and the capital will fall by degrees into its natural position of subordination to the central Government. The dismissal of M. ANDRIEU would have been the first step in a course which, if persisted in, would infallibly have reproduced the disorders which play so large a part in the history of revolutionary Paris.

STOLEN GOODS.

THE fate of the Bill to amend the law respecting the recovery of stolen goods which the LORD CHANCELLOR has presented to the House of Lords will be determined by the number of friends that dealers in that kind of property command in the House of Commons. Exception may undoubtedly be taken to some of its provisions, if the dealer in second-hand articles is to be accounted innocent till he is proved to be guilty. The draughtsman evidently regards this presumably useful, and even respectable, trade with deep-seated suspicion. Nothing which is not new is likely, in his view of matters, to have been honestly come by. The circumstance that a thing has been the property of some one else before it came into the possession of the second-hand dealer is treated as *prima facie* evidence that it was not willingly parted with. We are not disposed to deny that this exceptional severity of treatment may have become necessary. When LORD SELBORNE explains the Bill to the House of Lords, he will no doubt go fully into the statistics of theft, and show that the laws which he proposes to amend are inadequate to deal with it. It may at once be conceded that, if the trade of receiving stolen goods could be put down, the trade of stealing them would be hopelessly crippled. A thief, more than any other man, is anxious to convert his booty into some medium of exchange. Jewels and plate are only dear to him in so far as they can at once be sold. Consequently, if there were no one to buy them, the thief's occupation would be gone. It is true that, even if the trade of receiving stolen goods could be put down in this country, it might continue to flourish elsewhere; and, provided that the payment were equally assured, a thief might be as well pleased to have a correspondent abroad as an agent at home. But the extinction of the home trade would operate as a very great restriction upon theft. It could only be carried on at a great outlay, and consequently upon a great scale. A gang of thieves who disposed of their goods in Amsterdam or Paris must be experienced travellers and fair linguists, and have a good store of ready money. There is no need, therefore, to refrain from legislating against dealers in stolen goods within the United Kingdom because we cannot legislate against them beyond the United Kingdom. If it can be made an exclusively international industry, its extent will be immensely reduced.

The Bill begins by enlarging the powers of the police as regards searching for stolen goods. An inspector applying for a search-warrant will only have to state on oath to the magistrates that he has reason to believe that certain articles specified by him to have been stolen, or some of them, are in such and such premises, and will be excused from stating the reasons for his belief and from specifying which of the articles he suspects to be in the place he names. The inspector, having got his warrant, may proceed to search for the goods, and may apparently bring before the magistrates any articles whatever which he finds on the premises searched. They are then to be regarded as in pound, and if there is *prima facie* evidence that they are stolen, they may be detained until the owner can be discovered. If the person in whose possession they were found is unable to give a satisfactory account of how he came by them, he will be liable to a fine of 5*l.*, or, if the court shall be of opinion that they are stolen, to imprisonment for a month or to a fine of 50*l.* The dealer may also be fined 5*l.* if the court is satisfied that he had reason to suspect that the goods were stolen and did not give information to the police, a provision which may occasionally defeat a well-arranged story or an excellent imitation of a *bonâ fide* sale. The effect of these clauses will be to make search-warrants more easily obtainable,

and consequently searches more sudden and frequent. In many cases the police know perfectly well that the goods they are in search of are in some one of a very few places. But they do not know in which of these places they are, and consequently they cannot state specifically the reasons why they believe them to be in this or that place. Under the Bill it will be enough if they have reason to believe that they are in some one or more of them. The result will probably be that, whenever a robbery has been committed, all the places in which stolen goods are known to have been from time to time received will be searched as a matter of course, and as all goods whatever may be brought before the magistrates, the risk of keeping anything of the kind will be greatly increased.

The Bill does not deal only with the powers of police officers. It provides for an elaborate system of supervision of all second-hand dealers who have once got into trouble. For the future they must be licensed, and before they can be licensed they must produce a certificate from a magistrate. Considering that a similar provision is already in force as regards pawnbrokers, it would be unwise to expect too much from its extension; but the Bill does seem to supply several reasons why a pawnbroker or a second-hand dealer should wish to avoid registration. A registered pawnbroker or second-hand dealer must not open a new shop without giving notice to the chief officer of the police of the district which he is leaving and of that to which he is removing. He must keep his books in a prescribed form. He must not do business before nine in the morning or after six in the evening—a restriction which, to many pawnbrokers, would involve very serious loss. He must keep all articles received by him in the state in which he receives them for three full days before disposing of them. Consequently a registered pawnbroker or second-hand dealer will not only be a recognized black sheep, but a sheep whose colour is constantly being brought home to him in inconvenient ways. It will be easy enough, however, to avoid registration if a man is so minded. He will be safe so long as he has not been convicted of an offence under this Bill, or under the Pawnbrokers' Act, and even after conviction it will rest with the court to determine whether registration shall be imposed by way of additional penalty.

For certain purposes pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers will be impressed into the service of the police. Where they have received written notice that an article has been stolen, together with such a description of it as may enable them to identify it if it be in their possession, they will be bound if any article answering to the description subsequently comes into their hands to give information to the police, and to describe the person from whom it was received. They are also to permit a constable to inspect all the articles in their shop which are of the same description as the one specified in the notice. Perhaps these provisions are not likely to be found very formidable in practice; but by another clause any pawnbroker or second-hand dealer who suspects that an article offered to him is stolen may seize and detain the person offering it and give him in charge to a constable. It is clear that this will render the disposal of stolen goods in a neighbourhood with which the thief is not familiar, or to a person with whom he has not already done business, an undertaking of some delicacy. He cannot possibly tell what motive the dealer may have for being exceptionally honest in this particular instance. A man may be, as a rule, quite willing to buy stolen goods, and the thief may know him by repute in that character. But he may not wish to open an account with new customers, or he may be anxious to recommend himself to the goodwill of the police. On either or both of these grounds it may best suit his purpose to detain the thief, and to get whatever credit there is to be had by so doing. Unfortunately it is not thieves only that are likely to suffer if this part of the Bill becomes law. The dealer who takes it into his head to detain a person offering goods in pawn will be fully indemnified for what he does. He will probably assign as his ground for making the seizure that the prisoner has not given a satisfactory account of the means by which he became possessed of the article offered. But when a woman who has been reduced to poverty has taken to the pawnshop some gold or silver article which she possessed when she was better off, she may be wholly unable to comply with this condition. All she can say will be that the thing is hers, and that she has always had it, and unless the pawnbroker is

a person of some discrimination, he will not be likely to know whether this statement is true or false. No doubt the constable into whose charge she is given, or, at worst, the magistrates before whom the constable takes her, will find out the mistake. But the effects of an error of this kind are not removed when the error itself is set right. The prospect of a night in a police-cell, followed by an appearance in court the next morning, will be a very serious addition to the annoyance with which a visit to the pawnshop is invested in the imaginations of decent people. It is not easy to suggest any precautions which would render this provision less liable to abuse; but, unless some can be devised, it would be better to leave it out altogether. It contradicts a little too directly the spirit of the old doctrine that it is better for ten guilty men to escape than for one innocent man to suffer. With this alteration, and with some simplification of its clauses, the Bill will probably be found useful.

DR. PARKER AND THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

WE have been told on the authority of very credible ear-witnesses, though we cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement, that the Thursday preachments at the City Temple are, and are apparently intended to be, beyond comparison the most effective comic performances to be found in the metropolis. The congregation according to our informants, assemble on these occasions, whether to laugh with the preacher or to laugh at him it might be invidious to inquire, but at all events to be amused, and they do not go away disappointed. We seem also to have heard some strange stories about the close connexion of the platform and the press in the matter of a periodical called the *Fountain*, bordering in fact on transactions which, had they occurred in a State-paid and bloated Establishment, might not impossibly have earned from the righteous indignation of the *Nonconformist* and *Independent* the ugly name of simoniacal. It is difficult not to be reminded of these current rumours, on reading in last week's issue of that sturdy organ of "the dissidence of Dissent" a remarkable correspondence on "the Chairmanship of the Congregational Union," in which Dr. Parker's name figures with a prominence which even to himself—and he is not open to the charge of hiding his light under a bushel—can hardly be altogether satisfactory. The Congregationalists or Independents, according to *Whitaker's Almanack*, stand third numerically among Nonconformist bodies in the United Kingdom, yielding only to the Roman Catholics and the Wesleyans. They are also much the oldest of dissenting sects, dating from the time of Queen Elizabeth. It was only however in 1831 that their churches were formed into the Congregational Union, the chairmanship of which is now in dispute. This chairmanship, as we gather from the correspondence, is an annual office, candidates being nominated in the March of the previous year, though the friends of an enterprising nominee sometimes think it prudent "to take time by the forelock," or have at least so acted in the present instance. That there is anything actually irregular in this novel procedure is not alleged by their critics, who however naturally think it odd that, not content with justifying their precocious zeal, they should claim that "priority" of action gives them a right to suppress by anticipation all future opposition. It is with this singular claim of Dr. Parker and his friends that the first part of the correspondence deals, but it throws incidentally a somewhat lurid light on the grave underlying differences involved in the pending contest for the annual Papacy of Congregationalism. Mr. Alexander Hannay, who opens the discussion, is evidently, though he does not say so, the Secretary of the Committee of the Union, and he certainly appears to have been very hardly treated by "Priority," who maintains that the Committee, "instead of pursuing the traditional rule to inform the second nominee that Dr. Parker had already been nominated, have helped to get up signatures to promote a struggle"; that the officials of the Committee have departed from the usual course of procedure; and that either officials or Committee have even been guilty of malversation of public funds for promoting the interests of the rival candidate, Mr. Macfadyen. In all these assertions Mr. Hannay declares that there is "not so much as a grain of truth." The departure from traditional usage was in fact entirely on Dr. Parker's side, whose nomination, signed by fourteen persons, was sent in to the Committee on June 10, 1880, though no official notice of it could be taken till March 15 of the following year. Their real cause of complaint is that, when it became known that another candidate would be nominated at the proper time, the Committee did not inform Mr. Macfadyen that Dr. Parker was already nominated; to which there is the double answer, first, that no formal nomination had as yet taken place, and, secondly, that, were it otherwise, the Committee have no duty and no right to interfere to prevent a contest for the chairmanship. "On the contrary, the rules which provide for the present mode of election were adopted expressly with the view of giving the members of the Union a choice in the election of chairman between several nominees." As to the charge of misappropriating funds, which is rather hinted at than openly alleged, and this by an anonymous writer who offers no shadow of proof for his insinua-

tion. Mr. Hannay contents himself with a simple denial of an imputation which he reasonably characterizes as "in a high degree culpable and cowardly."

The next letter is from "a Member of Committee," who writes, "for the honour of Congregationalism and the prosperity of the Union," under severe provocation, with commendable self-restraint, but gives us rather a closer insight into the kind of tactics that find favour with Dr. Parker and his friends. He observes that his previous objections to Dr. Parker's appointment are greatly intensified by the fact of his having himself descended into the arena and become the advocate of his own claims. "For any man to try and persuade a large body of Christian gentlemen that they have confidence in him, or that if they have not, they ought to have, is a novelty, and one which I am extremely sorry to see introduced into Congregational practice." He adds, not unjustly, that, if Dr. Parker is right in contending that the opposition to him is of a purely personal character, "it is sad enough, but it is a conclusive reason against his appointment." The complaint of Dr. Parker and his friends "that there is a fixed determination on the part of the leaders of the denomination to exclude him from the chair on unworthy and insufficient grounds," is dismissed as simply incredible in itself, and nothing short of an insult to "brethren of so high a standing in the Churches." Like Mr. Hannay, the Member of Committee fails to detect any grievance in the fact that the premature action of Dr. Parker's fourteen supporters, who "resolved to take time by the forelock," and nominated him nine months before the appointed period, was not allowed to bar the way of the 438 representative members who subsequently, at the regular time, nominated Mr. Macfadyen. "The contention that the act of a few gentlemen in Kent ought to bind the Congregational Union, and that if their nominee be not elected there must be some personal animus, cannot be seriously advanced." Still less ground is there for the continued references to "the official mind"—meaning thereby the Secretary—as inspiring the opposition to Dr. Parker. "The truth is he has been perfectly neutral." Towards the close of the letter we are allowed to catch a glimpse of the real point of the controversy. Dr. Parker's abilities are not disputed, and "if the chair of the Union was simply to be a prize for intellectual power he ought to have been placed in it before this. But," adds the writer significantly, "it does sometimes happen that able men have idiosyncrasies which disqualify them for cordial association with others." One of these "idiosyncrasies" he proceeds to specify, which would go far to make Dr. Parker's election "an act of ecclesiastical suicide"; but he is careful to intimate that "there are other parts of his public action" open to exception, and that "his theological, political, and ecclesiastical vagaries" generally unfit him for the chairmanship. To most persons the one point dwelt upon at length would seem to be tolerably conclusive:—

Dr. Parker has declared open antagonism to the Congregational Union. He has sketched a Reform Bill, which really means an abolition of the Union as it is altogether. He objects to its constitution, objects to its policy, objects to its property—in fact, objects to everything about it except its name, and would take that as the title of a confederation which in character and aim would be totally different from the body which now exists.

Our readers may perhaps think they have heard nearly enough of Dr. Parker by this time; but the sting of the correspondence is in its tail, and the letter from Dr. Parker to Dr. Allon, with his reply, "which was returned unopened," let us look in behind the scenes. The name of Dr. Allon—who seems to have been lugged head and shoulders into this unsavoury dispute, and plainly tells us that he "loathes" the whole subject—will be familiar to many of our readers, as that of an accomplished scholar, editor of the *British Quarterly*, the leading organ of English Nonconformity, and author of at least one striking volume of Sermons which has obtained the high commendation of reviews neither Dissenting nor theological. Dr. Parker's letter to him, which, it will be observed, commences abruptly without any of the conventional forms of courtesy and is subscribed simply "Joseph Parker," is so very curious a document, especially as addressed by one minister of religion to another, that we shall place it as it stands before our readers:—

[Not Private.]

TO THE REV. DR. ALLON.

As the stories which you related to me, and which you are repeating to others, are doing me injury, and are so far fulfilling your intention, I hereby give you notice that I intend to publish the same, and to reply to them in detail, especially your frivolous stories about—(1) The controversy with Campbell. (2) The case of Pearson. (3) The visit of — to the City Temple. (4) The ridiculous story about Coley's visit. (5) The impression upon — of my book announcement. (6) Dale and Rogers covenanting with you for my silence. (7) Your inability to get any one to open a service for me in your church. (8) The "little man" who said none of his people would be there—and other pitiful rubbish which you pile up against me wherever you can create an opportunity for doing so.

Having done this, I shall trace your public life, and try upon you the effect of your species of undignified and unbrotherly criticism:—(1) Your "Consecration" sermons. (2) Your last Union address and the criticism it evoked. (3) Your right to have any connection with a tune-book, and what your musical brethren think of it. (4) Your sermon on Naboth—where did you get it? (5) Your controversy with Campbell, which was never settled. (6) What your brethren said when it was supposed you might settle in Liverpool.

My object in giving you this notice is to give you an opportunity of modifying or withdrawing your stories, through the medium of a third party, if you wish to do so.

My very heart sickens at the process before me; but it must be carried out in honourable self-defence.

March 29, 1881.

JOSEPH PARKER.

The reply, which was returned unopened, is a good deal longer, and written in a very different tone. It begins with the usual formula "My dear Sir," and is signed, "I am yours truly, Henry Allon"; it is, in short, what can hardly be said of the other, the letter of a Christian and a gentleman. But, quiet and courteous as he is throughout, Dr. Allon makes mince-meat of his angry assailant, most of whose charges turn out to be wholly gratuitous, while of others "I have tried in vain even to surmise the meaning." And the attitude now assumed by Dr. Parker becomes the more marvellous in view of his previous relations with Dr. Allon:—

You came to me to ask why you were not held by your brethren in that degree of respect which you desired. I might have refused the invidious and painful task of telling you, and your letter makes me very much regret that I did not do so. But you solicited my confidence, and I thought it most manly and most kind to tell you frankly how things publicly said and done by you were regarded; and, that you might know all, I mentioned every name and circumstance so far as I knew it. I went even to the verge of impropriety in telling you the opinions and expressions of certain gentlemen, concerning things said by you in the pulpit, expressed to me in conversation. You understood and acknowledged my motive, and when I said that I had gone farther than I ought to have done in repeating to you these opinions you thanked me, and said that the confidence should be honourably respected. Your letter indicates your notion of what honour is.

Dr. Allon adds that he spoke only of matters of public notoriety concerning Dr. Parker as a public man, and that he has nothing to modify or withdraw. As to the story connected with Mr. Coley's name, who is now dead and cannot be appealed to, it seems that Dr. Parker "explicitly denied that there was a particle of truth in the incident—namely, that you apologized in the pulpit for your cold, and said that 'this great brain had been seething all night,' and asked your audience to 'excuse your usual action.'" We can only say that, if the story is not true—and Dr. Allon of course feels bound under the circumstances to accept Dr. Parker's disclaimer—it is at least *ben trovato*. On what most people will consider a much graver matter Dr. Parker appears to have preserved a discreet silence:—

Why, in your communications, do you not propose to justify yourself from the much graver matters of public offence about which I chiefly spake—viz. your disavowal from the pulpit of responsibility for the *Fountain*, your covenanting for sales of the *Fountain* as a condition of preaching for your brethren, the matter of the advertisements, the candidature for the City, the chapter on Immortality, the letter to the *Times*, &c.—which, as I told you, had seriously hindered the confidence of your brethren.

Dr. Allon goes on to remind Dr. Parker that, little as he liked many things said and done by him—among which may perhaps be included his public avowal of sympathy with Mr. Beecher on a somewhat notorious occasion—he made a point of welcoming him on his first arrival in London, and had done his best ever since to maintain and induce others of his brethren to maintain friendly relations with him. These good offices, however, Dr. Parker promptly repaid by lampoons in his magazine, "and it is not easy to keep terms with a man who regards as an enemy every one who presumes to differ from him." Nor is Dr. Allon anxious to conceal his opinion that a man who has, whether rightly or wrongly, so entirely failed to conciliate his brethren, and who has always been in avowed antagonism to the Union, is not quite suited to fill its chair, which "ought not to be either the prize of a faction fight, the gratification of a petty vanity, or a reformatory for a cantankerous and foolish man." On the whole it is certainly a very pretty little "faction fight," and may suggest some lively reflections to Mr. Matthew Arnold, when he next takes up his pen to comment on the gracious amenities of Protestant Dissent. It would not of course be less unfair to select Dr. Parker than enthusiastic to select Dr. Allon as the typical mouthpiece of Congregationalism, but it is not unfair to take this pitiful wrangle over the claims of rival candidates for the Chairmanship of the Union as a characteristic example of the internal dissidence of Dissent. "Popery and prelacy" may have their abuses and their scandals; but it is evidently not in episcopal Churches only that Diotrephes loveth to have the pre-eminence, and perhaps even a *cong d'élire* may be thought less unifying than a contest which offers, on the testimony of those directly concerned, such unpleasant facilities for a public display of factionousness, "petty vanity," and "cantankerous" folly. We do not forget that the Independents had an element of greatness among them when they were represented by Cromwell's Ironsides, though even in their best days there was not too much of "sweetness and light" in their presentation of the Christian graces. But the glory of Cromwellian fervour, such as it was, has long since departed, and if the City Temple exhibits the most vigorous phase of modern Congregationalism, it can hardly be denied that Ichabod would be a not inappropriate epigraph to inscribe over its portals.

NEW KALENDARS AND OLD SONGS.

THERE is always something pleasant to persons not wholly soured in the contemplation of the joy of a fellow-creature, even if that fellow-creature be a modern Radical. To be informed, therefore—the announcement should surely have been made in rubric—that "the present week should be marked with a red letter in the calendar of the British Empire" is at first calculated to make even the cynic forget all his woes, from the east wind to the Land Bill, and inquire the reason for this festivity. When, however, he ascertains the reason of the jubilation, the case becomes a

little different. The happiest time, the maddest, merriest day of all the glad New Year to the modern Radical, is, it seems, the day of the evacuation of Candahar. This it is that he celebrates with trumpets and shawms. It would be a pity, and indeed it would be useless, to argue with him on the grounds of his *munc est bibendum*. We prefer to congratulate him on the almost endless prospect (bar the unexpected) of such festivities which is before him as long as it shall please Heaven to spare the Government of Mr. Gladstone. The peculiar kind of enthusiasm which Lord Beaconsfield so happily described as capable of being aroused only by the abandonment of a national policy or a national possession, has of late years found but little vent. The *Alabama* award, the results of the San Juan and Delagoa Bay arbitrations, were only partially satisfactory, for there was a show of honour and reason about them. The retreat was the fortune of war or of law, a matter in which the loser could comfort himself with the familiar better luck next time. The action of the late Government, however, and indeed of some scores or hundreds of Governments since England became a nation, has provided an inexhaustible store of things to be renounced, and the present Government revels in the luxury of renunciation. Candahar to-day, the Transvaal to-morrow; perhaps (the modern Radical whispers to himself with trembling bliss and awful joy) Cyprus the day after. It is almost too much for him, and if it goes on it will be quite too much for the Kalendar. We must suggest that the extravagance of reddening (by the way, the colour is, after all, not inappropriate) a whole week for a single evacuation is not to be thought of. There are only fifty-two weeks in the year, and there are a great many more than fifty-two foreign possessions in the rent-roll of the English monarchy—a phrase which we for our part prefer to the British Empire as being truer to fact and doing less injustice to Ireland. Behind Candahar there is Quetta, Scinde, the Punjab, India; behind the Transvaal, Natal and the Cape; behind Cyprus, Malta and Gibraltar. Very few years of a Radical Government would make the year all red-letter days, and impose a double debt on each, after the manner reprobated by Charles Lamb in his youth. It must, however, be admitted that the new Kalendar will have a sufficiently picturesque appearance. The Church has a Kalendar, the army and navy used to have one pretty thickly red-lettered, the Comtists have got one—why should not the modern Radical have his? Enterprising stationers will doubtless fall in with the hint, and have Radical Kalendar Notepaper ready very shortly. The motto will of course be, “*Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena pudoris?*” and a few general headings will suffice:—“Day of the retreat from —,” “Day of the capitulation of —,” “Day of —’s defeat at —,” and so forth. The use of these at first may be a little galling to the less thoroughly regenerate members of the party. The Liberal candidate for West Cheshire, with a candour beyond praise, has just confessed that “to him, as the son of an old soldier,” the Transvaal business gives an unpleasant twinge. But Mr. Tomkinson, and, no doubt, thousands more, get themselves out of the difficulty with the invaluable *distinguo* which their chief knows so well how to use. To them, as sons of soldiers, sons of Englishmen, &c., the things are painful, very painful; but, as admirers of Mr. Gladstone and enemies of the wicked Tory, they rejoice in them wholly. For to do Mr. Gladstone’s behest is all that is required of the faithful Radical, and to undo what Tories have done is *ipso facto* right.

It is probable that, if the modern Radical is not weary of well-doing, the unpleasant squeamishness of which Mr. Tomkinson complains will soon depart from him. Renunciation and vapulation are nothing when you are well used to them; indeed they acquire, as the meek in spirit frequently assure us, a positive relish. Evidences of this are to be found in a quarter which has not of late been suspected of actual Radicalism. The *Times* has been frequently accused of Philistinism, time-serving, and the like; but its reflections on the Easter holidays this year are scarcely to be accurately described by any of these terms. “We are all,” says the writer, “patriots in spite of ourselves”; and he proceeds to show beyond all doubt that, if he is a patriot—which is matter of argument—it is very much in spite of himself. All the fighting which has taken place, or has been within an ace of taking place, in the last four years has really, he says, been about questions affecting us very remotely, or indirectly, or problematically. The interest of the British people in Turkey, in Cabul, in Zululand, and the Transvaal is so slight that “we have to draw largely on the faith of the average Englishman to make him think it any at all.” “It requires a fine sense” (we suppose, to perceive it, for the scribe gets a little hazy here in point of grammar)—a sense which has “something of the over-sensibility which made our gentlemen a hundred years ago wear swords, and use them,” about such a matter as giving and taking the wall. This is certainly a most interesting confession. It will be observed that disputed points of history or politics are not here concerned. We may, for the sake of argument, suppose that the Turkish Empire was not really threatened; that Lord Lytton was wrong about the intentions of Shere Ali and of Russia; that the annexation of the Transvaal and the Zulu war were mistakes. The *Times* moralist’s principle is not affected by this. His doctrine is that, supposing the existence of disputed facts, England had really nothing to do with them except by a Quixotic straining of the point of honour. Maintain the independence and integrity of Turkey? What a plague had we to do with that? Defend India from encroachment? India is a very long way off. Protect the natives of the Transvaal and the colonists of Natal? This was the business of

the colonists of Natal and the natives of the Transvaal, not ours. In short, there is no such interest as the interest which a bond in honour creates. To defend clients, to protect the weak, to meet aggression half way, and with a steady countenance, not in the last ditch like vermin at bay, all these things are mere antiquated superstition.

L’honneur est un vieux saint que l’on ne chôme plus,

says the most vigorous of French satirists, and the *Poll Mall Gazette* and the *Times*, a remarkable pair, chorus the statement. If you want a holiday, says one, celebrate the retirement of Great Britain from a position which Great Britain was pledged to keep. If you have anything to do with these fine sensibilities, says the other, why don’t you wear a sword like your barbarous ancestors, and draw on the first impertinent person who jostles you in Fleet Street? Honour, and even interest, are old songs. The first interest of man is to keep a whole skin, and there is nothing so honourable to him as to run away. A clean pair of heels is the noblest and most beautiful part of the human figure, and it cannot be too lavishly exhibited. Putting the two doctrines together, it is difficult not to think that a certain ingratitude is shown by the compilers of the new *acta sanctorum* to their political foes. You cannot have the luxury of renouncing unless some one has previously acquired. The delight of running away is impossible unless there is a *terminus a quo* from which to start. Theologians of dubious orthodoxy have advised a lavish indulgence in sin that the graces of repentance may be fully enjoyed and displayed. But Tories save Radicals this doubtful manoeuvre. They construct the Empire for their rivals to pull down, and commit the sins of which the others luxuriously repent.

It is probably the abundance of this kind of repentance which enables the Radical party and their chief to dispense with any other. Mr. Gladstone’s discourse of dismissal for the Easter holidays perhaps made up in instruction for what it lacked in grace. The Premier was in great spirits, the reason for which he stated with much ingenuousness—it is because his majority is so very large. He does not repent (at least now, for a certain remark about “polemical utterances,” as well as others about the Transvaal and so forth, recur to the mind) of anything he said in his electoral campaign, and why? Because he has a large majority. Why should he care for Mr. Chaplin’s sense of humiliation? “It is not shared by the majority of this House.” Why should he not shorten the short holidays by bringing the Irish Land Bill in on Monday? The majority does not mind. Why should not Mr. Grant Duff snub members who make him answer in the affirmative a question which it is disagreeable to him so to answer? Mr. Grant Duff’s “tone was that of a large portion of the House.” Perhaps the poet of the *Poll Mall* (we do not mean either the author of the “Buck-Buck-Buckinghamshire Buffoon,” or the author of “Leading Cases,” but the constructor of the admirably poetical lines on Candahar the other day) will give us a version of the *Battle of Blenheim* for which the subject possesses great capabilities. Mr. Gladstone, interrogated on the consistency of his speeches of 1870 and 1881 as to Irish land property, on the attitude of the Government towards the Transvaal last year and this year, &c., might reply with irresistible force:—

“Why that I cannot tell,” quoth he,
“But I’ve a great majority.”

The attitude (Mr. Gladstone does not like the word ‘attitude’) is a pleasing one, and tells us how many other songs have grown old. Time was when Ministers (Sir Robert Walpole is, we admit, an exception) did not content themselves with proudly counting rows of obedient noses. However, we shall perhaps be reminded that “time was” is an idle expression, and that “time is” is the only one to which a sensible man pays any attention. Things may be a little disorganized, but are there not consolations? Have not the Boers magnanimously given up Potchefstroom? It is true that by the terms of the original agreement all the British garrisons were to be maintained, and all the captured material given back, so that in their apparent atonement for Commandant Cronje’s fraud the Boers have not sustained one atom of damage, and have gained for themselves compliments about their “descent from the chivalrous Huguenots of France.” But the very phrase of chivalrous Huguenots is a rest and refreshment, because it shows the blessed mantle of historical ignorance in which the modern Radical is wrapped, unless indeed, we are to have a new definition of chivalry as well as of honour and red-letter days in Kalendars. It is perhaps, on the whole, only proper that all such things should become new together. Let us have New Morality, New History, New Kalendars, and a great clearance of old songs of all kinds. For, indeed, what is the good of them? We have, as the *Times*’ philosopher justly remarks, to draw very largely on the faith of the average Englishman to make him attend to them, and he might have added that just now the bill seems to be dishonoured even when it is drawn. What is the use of drawing on Aldgate pump? Let us rather acquiesce in the new dispensation, and content ourselves with, on our part, dishonouring the bills which other people draw on us. Treaties are old songs; prestige is an old song; the British Grenadiers is an old song terribly in need of re-editing by the gifted bard above referred to. Let him give us an excellent new ballad, replete, as the advertisements say, with sentiments of mildness and meekness, recapitulating all the places from which the British Grenadier ought to scuttle, and dated the “Feast of the Settlement of O’Neil’s Farm.”

A DREAM OF THE ACADEMY.

DOGS hunt in dreams, according to Lucretius, Mr. Tennyson, and other learned writers, and most men know the discomfort of pursuing the labours of the day through the visions of the night. Mathematical students are wearied by the fancy that they are an unknown quantity; chemists dream that they are essences so subtle that they can only detect themselves in the spectroscope; sportsmen find themselves shooting with guns whose hammers refuse to let themselves be raised; and gamblers attempt impossible systems, on roulette tables of previously unknown description. Thus it is only to be expected that Queen Mab should be with art-critics, especially after the fatigues of "Studio Sunday." By the way, does the institution of Studio Sunday exist in Scotland, and what has Dr. Begg to say on the subject? These important inquiries we have no time to follow up. It is our business to repeat the story of a singular Dream of the Royal Academy, which visited an art-critic after Studio Sunday. He is rather what Mr. Carlyle would have called a "high-sniffing" art-critic. He is apt to complain bitterly of the way in which our artists, having made a bit, try to repeat it, and do repeat themselves, every year of their lives. He is also fond of writing about harmonies, notes, dominants, counter-point, and similar vanities, for all of which things a nemesis befell him in the vision which we go on to describe.

Our reviewer dreamed that he was the Press. He felt within him that restless impulse to write prose hymns to Mr. Rossetti, which distinguishes one critic, combined with the love of rare adjectives we admire in another, the gossip of a third, the Lemprière classicism of a fourth, and the contempt for all work not likely to be popular in Whitechapel observed in the chief exponent of the comic 'Arry, or "Yah" style of criticism. He marched up the stairs of the Grosvenor Gallery, and found himself in the rooms of Burlington House. What he saw, and how he liked it, will best be learned from the following article, which this unfortunate and probably overworked man composed in his vision. Swift once woke with the impression that he had said a very good thing in a dream. By an effort of memory he recovered it, and it was "I told Apronia she must be very careful, especially about the legs." The visionary criticism, though somewhat bizarre, was more coherent than the *mot* of the Dean.

"On another occasion we intend to return to the minute consideration of the pictures of the year. To-day it will be sufficient to discuss the most prominent works of the most admired artists. The Hanging Committee has assigned to that sterling popular favourite, Mr. Burne Jones, the post of honour. In Mr. Burne Jones's pictures, we have, as usual, work understood of the people. His rollicking humour and exuberant vitality have never been better illustrated than in his immense and learned composition, "The Baste that pays his Rint." The "Baste" is not, as our readers might imagine, the pig, but the tenant who "sneaks behind his neighbours' backs," and basely fulfils his contracts. Mr. Burne Jones has depicted a subject full of Irish humour, a "carding" match. The "baste," a tenant whose raiment has been partially removed, is being "carded" by two sturdy fellows with blackened faces. About a dozen others look on with torches in their hands. In the extreme distance may be seen a troop of mounted Constabulary, riding in an opposite direction. This is not only a most laughter-moving piece, but a valuable contribution, like most of Mr. Burne Jones's works, to contemporary history. Many years hence the student of the past will seek, and find, in Mr. Burne Jones's paintings, a precious guide to the manners and humours of the nineteenth century. Mrs. Butler, the famous artist of the "Roll-Call," sends a picture "whereby hangs a tale." It is no secret that the Prime Minister has expostulated with Mrs. Butler, in a friendly way, on her choice of glorious scenes from the remote past of ancient British history. Mrs. Butler has, therefore, at Mr. Gladstone's repeated request, designed a triptych representative of some of the more recent triumphs of British arms. The work is denominated "Scuttlings," and, being a triptych, is naturally in three compartments. The first compartment shows us our forces in full retreat from Candahar. The general is leading, at a great pace, and "go as you please" is the order of the day. The colours may be observed sticking out of the pockets of the officers, to which, by a recent general order, these emblems of our martial race are to be confined in moments of excitement. In the central compartment we have a view of the English troops returning, at the double, unencumbered with their arms, from the vicinity of Laing's Nek, which forms the background. On the top of the Nek is a small Boer boy, in an attitude of derision. English farmhouses are burning on every side; but Sir Evelyn Wood clasps, with an air of satisfaction, a document legibly marked "Apology." The third compartment, designed in the spirit of prophecy, represents the retreat of our gallant fellows before a corporal's guard of Waziris. As but little can be learned about these, our most recent foes, the artist has given them yellow complexions and a Mongolian cast of feature. We predict that Mrs. Butler's triptych will be the centre of admiring crowds. Arrangements have already been made to have "Scuttlings" engraved, and orders for proofs (before letters) have been received from Holland, St. Petersburg, and the Shields Liberal Association.

Thoughts of tender memory and tears of infinite desire invade the soul and overflow the brimming eyes as we gaze for the brief moment that pleasure so passionate permits on Mr. Frith's im-

mortal poem, "Helen in Leuké." The arras on the Academy walls is, fortunately, securely hung, otherwise it could never resist the weight of Mr. Frith's admirers, as they throw themselves with eager clutch and blind, adoring ecstasy on anything that seems to promise physical support. In the presence of delight-someness like this, once more vouchsafed by the Master to our eyes, words, howsoever vehement, are vain. Mr. Frith has chosen, somewhat to our bewilderment, his subject from "Pausanias, lib. iii. ch. xix." We have looked up Pausanias in our Lemprière, and we find that he was a Spartan general, starved to death in the Brazen House of Minerva Athene. Lemprière does not say that Pausanias left any writings. Be this as it may, Mr. Frith quotes thus:—"Leonumos, being wounded, was commanded by the Delphic Pythia to fare to the Isle of Leuké, and there should he be healed of his wound, who, having gotten back out of Leuké, said that there he beheld the spirits of the sons of Telamon and Oileus, and that Patroclus dwelt with them, also that Helen abode there, and was the wife of the ghost of Achilles." Mr. Frith has represented the beauty of the most beautiful woman of the world, heightened by fatigue and disease, transfigured and transformed by death and decay. In the midst of harmonies of silver air, in which the sickly moon strikes the dominant note, the gracious ghost of Helen stretches her weary and passionate arms to embrace that shadowy shape which, in days of common sunlight, was the swift-footed Achilles. All that we had to pardon in Achilles, all that we had to overlook in Helen, the brawny sinew, the coarse colouring, the glittering eyes, have been purified away. Both yearn eternally in the loveliness that can never be lost, the shadowy effulgence of the grave. Never let Mr. Frith paint otherwise than thus. Almost we could wish that Helen would strike him with blindness as she did Stesichorus, that his palette might never be profaned with colours less colourless, nor his canvas occupied with figures less limp and lifeless.

Mr. Whistler sends "My Last Duchess," a portrait of her Grace the Duchess of Stilton. Seldom has this courtly painter been so fortunate in a subject or an inspiration. Reviving the gracious classicism of the last century, the Reynolds of our age has represented her Grace as Juno with her peacock. The Peacock, a real fugue of Bach's, in the coruscating harmonies of his ecstatic notes of colour, occupies the entire foreground. Her Grace is faintly indicated, we might say hinted ('tis a mere innuendo, a breath, a vapour on the glass), in the middle distance. As Michael Angelo commonly left a corner of the unheavened primeval marble in his sculpture, so Mr. Whistler has neglected to glaze the hands and face of the Duchess. There is something sublimely precarious in this *Rohheit*, as Winckelmann phrases it, something worthy of the artist. Mr. Whistler also contributes two etchings in dry-point and counter-point, and an exquisite little painting in *niello*, after the manner of the early Speisian school. The etchings he calls "Portrait of a Gentleman" and "Portrait of a Painter-Etcher." The painting in *niello* represents a singular incident from the apocryphal book of Tobit with gracious *naïveté*.

We must return on another occasion to Mr. Burne Jones's popular canvasses, "In Training" and "Out of Training"; the first representing a boating breakfast, the second revelling in the humours of a Bump-supper. To Mr. Poynter's "Court of Thetis," a bery of sea nymphs gathered in a cave with "a ceiling of amber, a pavement of pearl," criticism may object that the Nereids are somewhat elderly, and scarcely display the charm of divine and deathless youth. But as most of the faces are fashionable, and all familiar, such criticism is obviously provincial, and cannot be listened to in the centre of taste. Mr. Millais's "Grandfather's Clock" is a most affecting work. It illustrates the beautiful lines:—

It stopped short, never to go again,
When the old man died.

The long white locks of the aged sire overflow a footstool, worked (observe the texture) with a kitten in Berlin wool and beads, on which pillow he has laid his weary head. The churchwarden pipe, dropping from his hand, has shattered into pieces, a beautiful emblem of "the end, the end, the end of all." The clock, a marvel of imitative design, is an eight-day article of inlaid mahogany, and the brass-work of the face is worthy of Van Eyck in its elaborate reproduction of nature. The hands point to noon. A cock is seen through the open window, perched on a farmyard wall. It is the cock which popular superstition, from Siberia to Ceylon, from Finisterre to Cape Matapan, "owes to Æsculapius" at the moment of a mortal's death. This masterpiece was painted for the proprietor of the copyright of the song, "Grandfather's Clock." It will be reproduced, in chromolithography, on the cover of that true *volks-lied*. This, indeed, is to bring art home to the people.

We come last to Prinsep's "Idyl," and precious *idyl* it is. Two girls with none too much on, prinsepally idling by a bay, and a *cove* playing the pipe to them. The ladies do not seem to object to 'baccy; perhaps, as the scene is in Sicily, they are Bacchantes, or rather nieces. No extra charge for that joke.

With 'Arry's yabs ringing in his ears, our shuddering critic awoke, and behold it was a dream.

MR. HORSLEY ON SUICIDE.

FEW of those who read the very remarkable article which the chaplain of the Clerkenwell Prison has contributed to the current number of the *Fortnightly Review* will be surprised to learn that women are more prone to suicide than men, but probably a good many readers will be surprised by the information he is able to give respecting the causes which drive women of the poorer classes to attempt self-destruction. No one can be better qualified than he is to speak on the subject, inasmuch as, owing to his position, a large number of those who in London try to commit suicide are, to a certain extent, under his charge. Persons who have committed this offence are, as we need hardly say, usually kept for a short time in the House of Detention, and the magistrates who commit or remand commonly intimate in a set phrase which has become familiar, that they ought to receive the advice of the chaplain. The chaplain, to use Mr. Horsley's words, "visits them daily, sees and writes to their relations, finds homes or other institutions for deserving cases where help is necessary, in other ways helps them temporally as well as spiritually; and in each case he writes to the committing magistrate his opinion of the case with a recommendation, which is always carefully and kindly considered, as to its disposal." Mr. Horsley, then, as Chaplain of Clerkenwell Gaol, has had to question, exhort, and remonstrate with would-be suicides innumerable, and to learn the motives which had prompted them to attempt their lives. From the note-books which, in the performance of his duties, he had to keep he has now taken "three hundred cases of separate individuals, not picked cases, however, but taken simply as they come"; and these may certainly be considered to indicate very fairly the causes of suicide amongst the poor. As has just been said, women are more given to this crime than men; and the facts which relate to women are therefore the most interesting. Very remarkable they are, and in some respects very surprising, as it is clear that the sufferings which might be thought to be most poignant with women do not often cause them to attempt suicide. It might be expected that amongst the classes in which a husband's infidelity is frequently made clear beyond all doubt, a paroxysm of jealousy would not infrequently drive a miserable wife to seek to make away with herself. This, however, is not the case; neither does that humiliation which is thought beyond all others to wound and distress women cause them, save in very few cases, to try to kill themselves. Out of three hundred attempts at suicide recorded by Mr. Horsley, only seven were due to jealousy or jilting; and some of the number who sought death for this cause may have been men. Another cause, of a very different nature, which might be thought to be potent with the working classes, seems to have very little effect. Seeing how frequently cases of cruelty to wives come before the magistrates, it would be natural enough to expect that hapless women subject to habitual brutality would try to end their wretched lives; but this is not so. Putting aside the statement of attempts by intoxicated women, Mr. Horsley's table shows only three attempts due to the conduct of "a bad husband," and two to "brutality of paramour." He mentions, it is true, five cases of women with bad husbands who tried to kill themselves when drunk; but attempts of this kind are of a different nature from those which are deliberately made. The small number of real attempts may be to show that habitual ill-treatment of wives among the poor is not so common as might be supposed from the records of the police courts. A further fact recorded by Mr. Horsley is not perhaps less remarkable. The pangs of conscience are rarely so acute as to cause women to try to destroy themselves. Mr. Horsley only records one case in which the remorse of an unfaithful wife caused her to attempt her own life.

As to the motives which do largely influence poor women who try to destroy themselves, Mr. Horsley's statements are not quite so clear as might be wished. He does not separate the sexes, so that in cases where the description of the reason does not indicate the sex it is not possible to discover the proportionate number of men and women. Out of the 300 attempted suicides mentioned by Mr. Horsley, 144 may be dismissed at once as due to drunkenness. Next in number, though with a great interval, are the cases in which the causes were unknown, and next are those in which the attempts were due to destitution, debt, disease, or distress. This seems, if the expression may be allowed, the most natural kind of suicide, and it is not surprising that out of 300 cases 40 were due to these causes. Domestic disagreement comes next on the list, and here ordinary expectation proves to be right, as women are found to be infinitely more sensitive than men. No less than fifteen women are shown to have attempted suicide in consequence of drunken quarrels with their husbands, but only two men were sufficiently moved by disputes of this kind to attempt to kill themselves. Curiously enough, amongst the lower classes neither husbands nor wives seem to have much power of driving their partners to desperation by incessant worrying or bullying. Mr. Horsley only mentions two cases as due to annoyance.* In one of these the offender was the wife, in another a drunken husband who had deserted his helpmate.

As may be seen from the above extracts, Mr. Horsley's statistics are very interesting, and, with regard to women, not a little different from what might be expected. What, however, will probably most surprise those of his readers who are not acquainted with other statistics relating to this subject, are his statements

respecting the influence of the seasons on this crime. Attempts at suicide, strange to say, are more frequent in the pleasantest part of the year than in the most disagreeable. This fact has several times been pointed out, but Mr. Horsley is able to put it in a very strong light, and moreover to suggest a reason for what seems at first sight unaccountable. He says:—

It appears, from books kept by my predecessors and by myself, that in the decennium 1868-77, there were nearly exactly 1,900 cases brought to the notice of the chaplain. Of these, 377 came in during the first quarter of the year, 542 during the second, 561 during the third, and 420 during the last. The first or winter quarter is thus 184 under the third or summer quarter; or, to divide the year into halves, there were in the half year, October to March, 707 cases, and from April to September, 1,193, a difference of 306. All crime is greater, or at least the total amount of crime is greater, during the summer half of the year, but yet the disproportion is not so marked as that we find in the one item of suicide. I believe, considering that nearly half the cases are those of seeking a watery grave, the difference of the temperature of the water has much to do with the matter.

It is quite possible that this very simple explanation is the true one. The notion of a plunge into cold water is, to the majority of men of the poorer classes, and still more to the majority of women, most unpleasant in the winter. It may be thought that this is a very tiny matter to any one who is bent on self-destruction, but the strange fancies of people who attempt or commit suicide have often been noticed, and, after all, but little can be required, in the majority of cases, to turn aside those who have just succeeded in bringing their courage up to the point of facing death. Respecting the age at which people are best able to make this effort, Mr. Horsley gives some facts which are as remarkable as those which he gives respecting the influence of the seasons. Taking periods of ten years, he shows that suicide follows the law which seems to govern all kinds of crime, and that the decade from twenty to thirty years is the worst. Out of his 300 recorded attempts, 124 were by persons within these limits of age. When this period, which seems to be so perilous for those who have any bent towards self-destruction, is passed, there is a great change. The number of cases in the decade from thirty to forty being only sixty-one, or half that of the preceding ten years of life. The longer men live the more they seem to get reconciled to life, or, at all events, the less desirous of quitting it abruptly. Between forty and fifty Mr. Horsley gives forty-four cases; between fifty and sixty only twenty-four. After sixty the desire for self-extinction appears to become very faint. As has often been noticed, the less life is worth having the more men seem to cling to it. True now, as in his own time, are Dryden's words:—

Strange cozenage, none would live past years again;
Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain,
And from the dregs of life think to receive
What the first sprightly running could not give.

It is worth noticing, however, that there are exceptions to this rule, and that the unadvisableness of living any longer does occasionally occur to old people. Mr. Horsley mentions the cases of two persons—of which sex he does not say—who, at the ages of eighty-three and eighty-eight respectively, came to the conclusion that they ought to leave this world. This view, however, is quite opposite to that which is usually taken by old men and women; and it is a curious proof of the perversity of human nature that, just as the old cling to life, so the young seem ready to quit it. It appears from Mr. Horsley's tables that the age at which suicide is most common amongst the humbler classes is twenty-two—that is to say, precisely the age at which the vital powers are at their highest, at which life should be most enjoyable and should seem to offer most promise. It might, of course, be thought that disappointments in love have much to do with suicides at this age; but this cannot possibly be the case, for, as has been shown, poor men and women, however foolish they may be in some respects, are not so foolish as to kill themselves for love. It is, then, most difficult to see why twenty-two should be, to use Mr. Horsley's expression, the favourite age. If people are more excitable then than they are later in life, they are also more hopeful, and loss and misfortune mean little to those who have all their best days before them. One explanation, however, of the fact recorded by Mr. Horsley suggests itself. A large number of the women who came under his care were courtesans, and probably even at twenty-two most of these unhappy women have become quite reckless and have lost utterly all hope for the future.

Want of space prevents us from noticing other remarkable facts brought forward by Mr. Horsley respecting suicide amongst the humbler classes of the community. It is to be observed that, striking and interesting as the facts he records are, they point to no general conclusion of any importance save that drink is a great cause of suicide, and this has long been known. He does himself, indeed, draw one very definite conclusion from his observation of those who had, with more or less earnestness, attempted their own lives. He is of opinion that attempts at suicide should be more severely punished, and gives the following reasons for this view:—

It is worthy of note that the impression (greatly justified by facts) which prevails among the class from which most of these cases come, that the punishment for the crime is merely a week's detention and a lecture, has a bad effect by causing the persons to think lightly of the crime, and even to repeat it on the next occasion of irritation or apprehension.

An alderman was once derided for expressing his intention of putting down suicide, but he probably meant, what is undoubtedly true, that some

real punishment, inflicted as a rule, would be a strong deterrent to those who are unable or unused to see moral crime in what is ignored or treated lightly by the law of the land.

I firmly believe that if it became the exception instead of the rule for such offences to escape a period of hard labour, the numbers of attempts would at once, and to a remarkable extent, diminish.

Here we find it quite impossible to agree with Mr. Horsley. No doubt there are every year a certain number of half-hearted attempts at suicide, and if the offence were more severely punished many of these would not be made; but, on the other hand, the certainty of severe punishment in case of failure would make those who really are sick of life much more determined in their efforts to put an end to themselves. Mr. Horsley himself remarks in the beginning of his article that during the last three years the number of suicides has been steadily decreasing, while the number of attempts at suicide have been steadily increasing. Were such a law as he desires enforced, this state of things would in all probability be exactly reversed. There would be fewer attempts, but more cases of self-destruction. A man who was really anxious to die would certainly be stimulated in his attempt to remove himself from the world by the thought that, if he did not succeed, a degrading punishment awaited him. Men are not likely to be reconciled to life by the prospect of a long term of imprisonment; and, though suicide is undoubtedly a crime, it is repugnant to the instincts of humanity to treat unfortunate wretches who have been driven to it as if they were criminals of the ordinary stamp.

INDEPENDENT ART.

AN exhibition has been recently opened at No. 35 Boulevard des Capucines, "par un groupe d'artistes indépendants," as they style themselves in their prospectus, although they are none other than our old acquaintances the "Impressionists," who have, however, become disgusted with the name under which they first challenged public attention. Nor is this disgust to be marvelled at, for the term "Impressionist" has been applied to Courbet, and to others like him, who knew how to draw, and who were not ignorant of the art of painting as it is generally understood by ordinary mortals; and these two accomplishments stink in the nostrils of "independent art." The first things that strike a spectator's eye on entering the independent gallery are the frames in which it has seemed good to the exhibitors to hang their works; and one asks oneself in sheer bewilderment whether it can be possible that the independent artists have succeeded in finding an independent frame-maker to aid them in their task, for it is out of the question that any sane workman should have consented to make such monstrosities. Frames of scarlet, frames of mauve, and frames of violet follow each other in hideous succession, forcing the wearied eye to turn for relief to the pictures they enclose, and making one think that this ugly manifestation of eccentricity may, after all, be the result of a well-hatched plot on the part of the artists to force one to look at their productions. Of the technical qualities of these it is so difficult to think seriously—or to think at all—that we devoted most of the time that we spent among them in endeavouring to find out the hidden impulses which drive men to represent nature in such a manner. In this matter we believe that we have had some success. The conviction in which the independent landscape-painter clothes himself as in a garment appears to us to be that the world which we inhabit is a much steeper place than we work-a-day people have supposed it to be; and that its denizens—man and beast and creeping thing, together with its vegetation—suffer under a chronic tendency to fall from right to left. Of this doctrine we may cite, from among many others, two triumphant manifestations—"Le Quai des Célestins" by M. Guillaumin, and "Le Boulevard Rochechouart" by M. Pissarro. It is simply fearful to think of what might happen if, in obedience to any natural law, the things which M. Guillaumin has portrayed in the picture we have mentioned were to come to pass. The quay in the left of his picture falls violently to the left, dragging with it the river Seine, whose waters are discoloured with "streaks of green and purple, like those on a tiger's forehead," as Blake has it in his "Marriage of Heaven and Hell"; while the trees on the right protrude menacingly like the crest of some savage monster, and the "Pont Marie" totters in the background, to the imminent danger of an omnibus about to cross it. M. Pissarro's "Boulevard" is, if possible, more disquieting to behold; miserable human beings are seen vainly striving to keep their feet on the pavement of this street, which the engineers of Paris have obstinately built at right angles to the inclination of the fearful declivity that he represents; and yet we have often walked through the boulevard in question, deeming that the right-hand and the left-hand sides of it were on a level with each other. As if these strange aberrations in the art of perspective were not calculated to alarm the spectator sufficiently, the painter has summoned to his aid all the powers of a crude and violent scheme of colouring. His shadows are bright blue, and his high lights scarlet—colours apt to disconcert and to strike terror into the beholder. We wish that we had no more serious accusation to bring forward against M. Pissarro than his ignorance of drawing and his inharmonious colour; but he has exhibited other works of a more ambitious character, notably "Le Fendeur de Bois" and "Paysannes du Val Hermé," in which he does more than merely

imitate certain works of Jean François Millet. And this is an indictment which holds good against many of the "independent" artists, who in more than one instance in their figure compositions owe what little merit they possess to very uncompromising reminiscences of the masters they affect to despise. This aspersion, however, can in no wise touch M. Degas, whose work is utterly unlike that of any other artist. Amongst other things, he exhibits an oblong piece of paper, covered in one corner by a horribly ill-drawn head of a soldier in coloured chalks, and in another by a rude sketch of a military cap. This production is mentioned in the catalogue as a "Physionomie de Criminel," a title which is also accorded to a sketch of an unsightly being smelling a bone, while an idiotic woman looks on approvingly—a work in the same manner by the same artist. It is to M. Degas that we owe the wondrous spectacle of independent sculpture, in the shape of a "Petite Dansense (statuette en cire)." Here we find ourselves face to face with a wax model of a hideous young woman, devoid alike of bone and of muscle, clad in white wax stays, red wax shoes, and a real muslin frock. This appalling image is protected from the profaning air by a glass case, and is in every way worthy of being considered as the last word of independent art. We will therefore abstain from speaking of the numerous studies of persons in an advanced stage of decomposition, humorously spoken of in the catalogue as "études de jeunes femmes," and "études d'enfants," and pass on to the works of M. Raffaëlli and M. Vignon. Here, at any rate, we have the consolation of being able to speak of works of real talent. The first in the catalogue of M. Raffaëlli's numerous studies is an oil picture of two worn-out men playing at cards in a suburban "auberge" called "Les Déclassés." We have rarely seen a more careful and intelligent study of Parisian character than that which this picture brings to our notice. There is something in the faces of the two men that reminds us of Balzac's best pages; and the accessories, although somewhat crudely treated, are true to nature and help out the subject. "Cassant une croûte" is another admirable instance of this artist's power of seizing the character of those strangely interesting types that one so often sees in the vicinity of the old fortification lines of Paris. In "Une Grue à vapeur" and "Deux Vaches et trois Poules," M. Raffaëlli shows his power of dealing with water-colour; these are pictures in which he displays his ability of seeing the poetic side of common things, and which make us the more regret that he should have exhibited such a lamentable performance as his "Chemin de fer sous neige," which purports to represent a locomotive engine leaving a station, but which at a little distance is suggestive of a deformed rhinoceros charging a row of palings. His "Locomotive en manœuvre" is, on the other hand, a very charming little study, with a singularly inappropriate title, for the subject is in reality a stretch of landscape with a dark windy sky, and the steam-engine, from which the picture takes its name, is only visible as a black speck in the distance. We hope to see more of M. Raffaëlli on other occasions, and devoutly trust that in future we may find him in better company. M. Vignon, although decidedly inferior to him in originality, displays some excellent qualities; and his landscape, marked 152 in the catalogue, is in every way a good picture. His other works do not rise above the level of a respectable mediocrity; but we are so grateful to any one who evinces any artistic capability whatever in these torture chambers, that we cannot forbear mentioning them with approbation. Neither can we leave the Gallery without referring to M. Raffaëlli's "Bourgeois lisant les faits divers," which we have overlooked in our notice of his works. This picture, which represents an old gentleman of the lower-middle class reading the account of a savage murder, displays a sense of humour on the part of the artist which is rarely to be met with out of England. An extract from the account in question, let into the frame, enables one to see at a glance the exact words with which the old man is comforting his soul—a contrivance of doubtful taste, but which is not the less effective in its way. There is some truth of colour in M. Rouart's "Vue d'Antibes"; a quality which consoles one a little for his weak drawing, and M. Tillot exhibits some tolerable landscape sketches. Let us should come away with anything approaching to a pleasant impression, the "Indépendants,"

more cruel far
Than wildest wolves and savage tigers are,

have reserved a dismal surprise for us in the shape of "La Char-teuse, Médaille," a sort of glorified wooden soup-plate, with a blue-eyed howling monster carved in relief on it, who bears some distant resemblance to a woman. This "knaveish piece of work" is suggestive of the first efforts in wood-carving of some North American Indian; and one is surprised that it is not signed "Raging Wolf" or "Spotted Tail." With sore eyes and a troubled brain we turned from these unearthly nightmares. In the courtyard below a blind fiddler was playing a choice selection of fashionable airs; he, at any rate, was following the rules laid down for the guidance of his art, to the best of his ability, and his strains, in which some vague notion of a harmonious ensemble was conveyed, fell like a pleasant shower upon our withered soul, and we went forth marvelling at the case of that man to whom it befell that a street musician should repair the havoc that had been made in his spirit by a group of independent artists.

In this article the name of Camille Muller, the self-taught

artist of "Le Tréport," naturally finds its place. Dead at the premature age of nineteen, he leaves behind him a number of portraits, and of still-life pictures, which make one regret his loss. His work, always excellent in intention, despite the faults of extreme youth, shows none of the hesitation of the beginner. His drawing, often correct and always vigorous, and his remarkable power of dealing with masses of rich colour, incline us to the belief that, had he lived, he would have achieved lasting fame in the annals of French art.

SPIRITS IN PRISON.

THE very moderate sentence passed by Mr. Justice Hawkins upon Susan Wills Fletcher *alias* Sister Bertie, is doubtless unpleasant to that person, who is vouchered for under the hand of a friend as one of the best and sweetest women she has ever known. Sweet is a very ambiguous term—sugar of lead is decidedly sweet; but, if Mrs. Fletcher was the best woman that her courageous friend has ever known, the moral character of the friend's circle cannot be regarded as altogether high-toned or whole-souled. For the first time (if we put out of sight a very inadequate imprisonment endured by a follower of Slade, who was unwise enough to choose Yorkshire as the scene of his operations) positive punishment has been inflicted by English law upon those who avail themselves of the most degrading and dangerous delusion of modern times to rob the dupes of that delusion. The remarkable audacity with which Mrs. Fletcher ventured into the lion's den after the experience she had had in America of the changed sentiments of Sister Juliet, was sure to be wrested into a proof of her innocence. It is hardly necessary to say that the principal and most dangerous ground of confidence which swindlers of this kind have is the reluctance of their victims to make open confession of their folly. It is a pity, certainly, that husband and wife should be separated; and a twelvemonth or two of prison quiet, and perhaps a little hard bodily labour, would no doubt be an excellent alternative for Mr. William Fletcher, after the excitements and unhealthy spiritual exertions of his life as a medium. Mr. Morton, too, the lawyer-colonel, who was in England last week and to be found in just the place he might have been looked for in—a curious instance of the intelligent activity of the English police—would have been a pleasing completion to the trinity. But, if prevention be the end of punishment, the fate of the best and sweetest of women is likely to be as effective as the fate of her accomplices.

The history of the case, like the history of most such cases, may be said to have tended a good deal more to amusement than to edification. We desire to speak with all respect of Dr. "Mac"—doctor of healing, if not of medicine—who has certainly been instrumental in bringing one rogue to justice and in baffling the machinations of two others. It would appear that Mrs. Hart-Davies is in absolute need of somebody to lean upon, and hitherto Dr. "Mac" appears to have been a sufficiently trusty staff. Her previous supports have, we fear, proved but broken reeds. Her husbands leave her under circumstances doubtless susceptible of the fullest explanation; her lovers, if only *ci-devant* lovers, go off in the most irritating fashion with her sworn sisters, and her "brothers" are the rottenest reeds of all. The affection of a young trusting heart, as this lady pathetically describes her *épanchement*, seems to have been more than once cruelly deceived. As to the Fletcher story itself, it might almost have been written without knowledge of the actual facts by an intelligent novelist. A remarkably excitable and impressionable person is discontented with her present relations in life, has Spiritualist leanings, and thinks with regret of her dead mother. This is the great handle which Spiritualist rascality invariably works. The only perceivable idiosyncrasy in Mrs. Hart-Davies was her extraordinary gullibility, the implicit faith with which she received the announcements of the Fletchers, and the rapidity with which she divested herself of her worldly goods in their favour. None of the more exquisite impostures were required; it was sufficient for the mediums to fall into a trance, to look at a divining ball, even to write in a letter that the deceased lady "had walked across the room with the grace of a true queen," and the thing was done. Mrs. Hart-Davies at once made room for the Fletchers, man and wife, in her capacious heart. They made a trinity, in which Fletcher represented Wisdom (*i.e.* that of the serpent), Mrs. Fletcher Work (and indeed she seems to have performed the tasks allotted to her with creditable thoroughness), and Mrs. Hart-Davies Love, a commodity of which she seems always to have had a great deal to give away or exchange. The affectionate consideration of the maternal spirit discovered that certain valuable property which she had left to her daughter was altogether too magnetic, that it was exercising a bad effect on her health, and that it had much better be transferred to Sister Bertie and Brother Willie. The transfer was effected with speed and completeness, and the uses to which the best and sweetest of women put the jewelry and the lace were, to say the least, peculiar. No sooner, however, had the too magnetic ornaments found themselves (sometimes with very little else, it would seem, to keep them company) on the person of Sister Bertie, than the affection of that saint and the other saint, her husband, began to cool. A long journey was undertaken in company (always a rash thing), and Mrs. Hart-Davies saw with disgust (or without it, whichever the student of human nature may prefer) "a handsome Captain," a former admirer

of her own, make tracks at the port of debarkation with Sister Bertie and remain absent for some days, occupied doubtless, under her guidance, in cultivating relations with the spirit world. Then Dr. Mac appeared on the scene, and things were not so pleasant for the Fletchers. Of the Doctor's powers of healing we can give no opinion, but he seems to know a rogue when he sees him, and to have a very shrewd notion of the proper method of treatment to be applied to that phenomenon. With the assistance of the American authorities a good deal of the property was disgorged, and, on the woman Fletcher making her appearance once more in this country, proceedings were taken with the result which everybody knows. The history is in the main a very old one. Groveling superstition, which actually anticipates the attempts made to deceive it, and holds out its throat to the knife and its pocket to the spoiler, is nothing new in the history of the world. Neither is the fact that such superstition occasionally "takes the rue" after a time and discovers its own folly; nor the fact that jealousy is a very useful instrument in bringing about such resipiscence. The principal points of novelty in the individual story are the fact that most of the plunder was recovered, and the fact that one at least of the plunderers has met with something like her deserts.

Unluckily there were certain special features in this matter which are indeed almost always more or less clearly discernible in such affairs, and for which readers of the *Tale of a Tub* and beholders of Hogarth's "Enthusiasm Delineated" are pretty well prepared. Mr. Justice Hawkins, with great propriety, restrained the cross-examination of counsel as much as possible when it tended in this direction, but (as properly) he referred in his sentence to a possible aspect of the matter which, if less legally criminal, is morally more disgusting than the most barefaced spoliation of a credulous dupe by designing rascals. Even in Spiritualist trials and investigations, there are recorded few things more nauseous than the "scrunches," the "cuddling rests," the "pawing," the inquiries about "having babies in the spirit world," the allusions to "handsome captains," the confessions by a wife in the character of go-between that her husband has for some time ceased to regard his spiritual sister in a merely sisterly light, and so forth. The fact, however, that sooner or later this particular cloven hoof always peeps out in these cases of ghostly imposture, though it is not in the least surprising to physiologists or historical students, is perhaps worth bearing in mind by those who have a hankering after Spiritualism, and who regard it as a precious buttress to religion, a field for pure and immaterial delights, and so forth. The correct way, according to a great scientific authority, to discover whether a spirit is properly "materialized" is to take her in your arms. The average visitant from the other world (and it is curious how much oftener these visitants are of the sweeter and better sex) is quite *approvoisée*, and does not object to the harmless test. It is, perhaps, from this originally scientific and experimental practice that "scrunching" and "cuddling" have come to hold so large a place in the operations of spirits and Spiritualists. Or it may be contended that the reaction from the high ethereal delight of spirit communion requires such methods, and is, indeed, helped by them. "I touch heaven when I touch a human body," says Walt Whitman, among whose oddities, to do him justice, Spiritualism does not seem to be counted. Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher and their likes appear to have hit upon the same method of reaching the celestial regions, though it is less euphoniously expressed in their favourite term of "scrunching."

No one of course supposes that persons far gone in Spiritualism will be in the least affected by this exposure; that, indeed, they will be any more affected by it than by the scores and hundreds of exposures, equally clear, if less disgraceful, that have occurred before. But it is perhaps worth while to point out that the trial ought to do good from the very fact that it does not directly attack Spiritualist belief. Any believer in the general doctrine that there is no wisdom in the grave, which, as based upon the reported utterances of spirits, may be said to be a sound general principle, may hold, if he likes, that Mr. Fletcher was a wicked man who did not really see the spirit of the late Mrs. Heurtley, or that he was a wicked man who did see her and perverted her commands to his own base purposes. But even such a person, unless he or she is as far gone as Mrs. Fletcher's compurgatress, who holds her to be the best and sweetest of women, must admit the extraordinary "shadiness" which hangs over the whole affair. The nauseous language, the indecent photographs, the sordid cupidity of the mediums, the pitiable confessions that the victim has to make, these are things likely to make a deeper impression on the sort of mind which, as a rule, falls a victim to Spiritualism than repeated exposures of phosphorus-bottles and flax wigs, slip-knots and false-bottomed cabinets, slate pencils under the nail, and hands made of sawdust and flesh-coloured kid. The latter appeal to the judgment, which in such cases very frequently does not exist; the former to feelings of shame and taste, which frequently do. To be gulled is, after all, nothing very terrible. But to be degraded into taking a vicious and vulgar Yankee adventurer for a saintly prophet, a greedy harpy and possible *entremetteuse* for a sweet spiritual sister, this is an experience of which few women, we should think, would altogether care to run the risk. The very fact that in this particular case it is hardly possible to feel any sympathy for Mrs. Hart-Davies is the strongest argument in this direction.

RAILWAY ROUGHS.

WE called attention last week to the dangers attending railway travelling by the Underground, but it seems that we did not do full justice to the capacities and resources of the roughs who make the third-class carriages of that line their playground. We pointed out that it was undesirable for a passenger to interfere with the freedom of speech of his fellow-travellers, and that, however unpleasant, it is on the whole better to listen quietly to blasphemy and revolting language, than to subject oneself and wife to being kicked to death. Our article implied, and indeed we fancied, that assault and battery were only inflicted as a punishment for active remonstrance; but we must confess to having displayed some ignorance as to the rules of the road which obtain on the railway. It appears that the real offence which an ordinary passenger gives is that of existing; he occupies space which the rough requires for the exercise of his exuberant vitality; or he renders himself objectionable by obtrusive respectability. The rough regards this class of persons much as the American youth did the toad at which he was throwing stones. When asked why he pelted the harmless animal, he replied, "I'll larn him to be a toad"; and the British ruffian will "larn" any inconsiderate youth to be a schoolboy and venture into a third-class carriage. Only the other day a gentleman sent his son, aged fifteen, on the Metropolitan District Railway from Kensington to the City by third-class. The youth is described as "decently dressed and well behaved," and it might have been fairly supposed that he would reach his destination without any very unpleasant adventure. At Blackfriars, however, a gang of roughs entered the carriage, grossly maltreated the poor boy, hustled him about, and kicked him out of the carriage with his clothes torn to ribbons. In this case there was no interference of any kind with the newcomers, they had not even the excuse that the carriage was overcrowded; they saw a well-dressed and decently-behaved lad occupying a seat in a carriage, and they maltreated and kicked him out without rhyme or reason, simply because he was quiet and respectable. The British rough is probably actuated less by a spirit of cruelty and injustice than by a misguided sense of humour. Suffering, human and animal, has for him a comic side, and he takes his pleasure in kicking a woman or torturing a cat. An incident at a fire as reported by a street loafer aptly illustrates the feeling which seems to animate this class. "On the roof," said he to a friend, "was an old man among the flames. 'Jump, you stoopid,' I cried; and jump he did and broke his blessed neck. *I never laughed so much in all my life!*" The jest is a brutal one, but unfortunately it indicates the frame of mind of the scoundrels who perpetrate these outrages.

We are far from saying that the majority of third-class passengers by the Metropolitan are of such a savage type; on the contrary, the artisan classes, of whom they chiefly consist, are as a rule remarkable for their orderly, and even scrupulously decorous, behaviour. But they have a wholesome aversion to the "rough," and avoid a conflict with him under any circumstances. The average artisan, with his belongings, when assailed with ribald abuse, or threatened with personal violence, does not even trust to a soft answer to turn away wrath, but rather acts upon the principle that a still tongue makes a wise head. He knows that roughs hunt in packs, and that he would single-handed stand no chance against his assailants. The most frequent victims are the helpless school-boy, or the inexperienced old couple who, falling in with a gang of boisterous ruffians, venture to assert their right to a peaceful occupation of the seats for which they have paid, under the fond delusion that the power which provides so carefully for the examination of their tickets will extend its watchful guardianship to the safety of their persons. The rough knows better; he is fully aware that there is not a policeman on the premises, that the few officials on duty have more than enough to do to clip the tickets and shut the doors, and that the mass of humanity within the carriages is no concern of theirs, however it may seethe and upheave. He therefore can and does enjoy himself to the top of his bent, beating and kicking his fellow-travellers, and making Underground railway travelling more dangerous than active warfare. From one thing he generally abstains—namely, from cutting the cushions or breaking the windows; for these are the Company's property, and damage to them would call the accusing placard into existence and the insidious detective into action. Quiet human beings, however, are his safe and legitimate sport.

One would expect to find the Metropolitan Railway free from most of the dangers which beset the other lines. The block system is so rigorously worked that a collision is, or should be, almost impossible; the stations are so close together, and the stoppages so frequent, that it might be supposed that the whole system was as much under the public eye—and, therefore, the public protection—as an omnibus in the open street. It is just in this point that a mistake or a miscalculation has been made. Relying upon this supposed publicity, and consequent assumed security, the Companies have provided for the speed and efficiency of the traffic, as well as against frauds on themselves, believing that their whole duty ended there and that the public could take care of itself. The events of the last fortnight have demonstrated this view to be erroneous, and have shown that a passenger in difficulties may be absolutely helpless and abandoned in a carriage on the line. To take the mildest case, and one of frequent occurrence, a person may fall asleep and be carried

far beyond the station at which he wishes to alight; for it is clearly not the business of his fellow-passengers to awake him, and the inspection of tickets at stations so numerous and separated by such short intervals is as clearly out of the question. If there were an official stationed on the platform, whose sole duty it were to see to the safety and comfort of those travelling in the carriages, even so mild an inconvenience as this would be remedied, while the supervision would be an absolute safeguard against such outrages as we have described. Men who thus brutally assault old men, women, and boys are natural cowards; and the mere knowledge that there was a policeman, or, as they would probably call him, a "copper," within hail would materially check their martial ardour.

We give the Railway Companies every credit for a desire to provide for the safety and convenience of the public, and for a belief that the precautions hitherto taken are sufficient; but the facts we have cited prove that more protection is required. Certain disorderly members of society daily threaten the comfort and safety of passengers; granted that the Companies cannot eliminate them, they can, at least, and must, take measures to render them harmless. A train that crosses the prairies is provided with cow-catchers to throw off the cattle which cannot be prevented from straying upon the line; so, too, the Underground trains should be provided with means for checking the extravagances of roughs and preventing violent assaults in its carriages. The method for attaining this end we have already indicated; at least one official should be placed on duty at every station to look after the passengers and give information when required; sufficient time should also be allowed at each halt for the inspection of the carriages and the safe ingress and egress of travellers. The danger attending an attempt to enter or leave a carriage while in motion is fully recognized by the Companies and very properly guarded against, so far as possible, by closing the spring-gate immediately on the arrival of a train, in order to prevent any person from making a rush for the moving carriage at the last moment. But, since a large proportion of the passengers are unacquainted with the line, it constantly happens that a person may be in good time on the platform, and yet, through being in doubt about his train, may find the carriage in motion just as he is about to step into it. Such travellers furnish every year a large proportion of victims to the Juggernaut of railway officialism. It is to be hoped that, since Thuggee and Dacoity are now added to the other sources of danger, something will be done.

Of course all persons are expected to take reasonable care of themselves, and to acquire a reasonable knowledge of the existing laws. Thus, a foot-passenger in crossing the street is bound to keep a look-out, and not to rely alone upon the care or skill of the drivers of vehicles. It is also an axiom that ignorance of the law is no excuse for a crime, it being the duty of every citizen to acquire so much legal knowledge at least as to enable him to recognize an illegal act. But these principles do not apply to Metropolitan railway travelling, and a passenger on the line cannot reasonably be supposed either to provide himself with an armed escort against assaults by roughs, or to master the intricate laws which would teach him that his train is "the next but two on number 6 platform." No doubt, if passengers were less peaceably inclined, and if disorderly characters who use foul language and assault their neighbours were always severely dealt with by the other occupants of the carriages, the annoyance would cease. But the fact that the general public do not repress the rough is no reason why he should be allowed to lord it with undisputed sway over the whole system of the Metropolitan lines. Some provision for the safety of the passengers, for the good order of persons using the carriages, and for affording information when required, is absolutely necessary. Now that the facts and wants are known the Companies will doubtless take active steps to remove the stigma of inefficiency which attaches to their present arrangements; if they are slow to move in the matter public opinion may be trusted to give them, before long, the needful stimulus.

THE TRADE PROSPECTS.

THE course of the present trade revival affords striking illustration of the decreased importance of the home harvest as regards the economic condition of the country, and also of the considerable influence which is still exercised by the weather. The harvest of 1879 was perhaps the worst of the present century, and it followed three harvests which were also bad. All over the Continent, likewise, the crops were deficient; and it seemed, therefore, that the long depression must be intensified. But in the United States there was an extraordinarily abundant harvest, following two splendid harvests. The demand for American produce in Europe stimulated American industry, and in its turn American industry imparted new life to trade in Europe. As our readers remember, the revival was set on foot by the extraordinary demand for iron for the United States, and it continued until the dissolution of last year gave it a temporary check. In the course of a few months, however, trade again began to improve, and towards the end of 1880 there was a general expectation that we were about to witness a still greater improvement during the New Year. The expectation was in accordance with past experience. For it is the usual course that, when once prosperity is imparted to any considerable industry, it transmits itself to other industries, and ultimately to the whole com-

munity. For example, when the large purchases of British iron on American account occurred in the autumn of 1879, the price of iron and steel was immediately run up, and property which had previously been unprofitable and unsaleable suddenly became very valuable. All who were engaged in the production and manufacture of iron earned large wages, and both employers and employed thus were in possession of increased means to spend on other trades. These in their turn were able to increase their own outlay, and thus the improvement was transmitted from industry to industry and from class to class. Nor was this all. The increased value of iron properties rescued a great many of the banks from the discredit into which they had sunk. Those to whom the banks had made large advances were able to pay off a part of their debt, or the securities given by them to the banks became saleable, and, in either case, the banks escaped from the catastrophe which seemed impending over them. They were thus able to lend and discount more freely, and to accommodate the trading community of their several districts. Both by the revival of credit and by the increased spending power, to which we have referred above, the prosperity of the country was gradually increased, and it seemed natural to expect, at the end of last year, that the process would go on until prices and wages were run up so high as to check consumption, and thus bring the inevitable reaction which follows all periods of great prosperity. But the first three months of the present year have not answered the general expectation. On the contrary, trade is undoubtedly duller than it was at almost any period of 1880. Trade circulars and market reports have lost the sanguine tone which lately characterized them. One reads general complaints of the paucity of orders, and the little prospect there now is of an early improvement; and there is also a tendency to a decrease of wages. It may be worth while to inquire how this has happened, and whether the revival has really come to an end, or whether it is only one of those temporary checks which are always to be expected in such movements.

The chief evidence of the check to trade is afforded by the fall in the prices of the raw materials of manufacture and of the articles of food. But it is important to bear in mind that a fall of price may be brought about by one of two causes—by a diminution of demand or an increase of supply. To the tradesman it is not immediately material which of these causes is in action. If there is a sudden fall in the prices of the commodities in which he deals, he loses part of the profit upon which he had counted, and may lose even a very considerable proportion of it. But ultimately it is of very great importance to him. A decrease in the demand, if it continues, means that the price must continue to fall until either the demand revives or the price reaches the level below which the dealer cannot afford to sell; whereas an increase of the supply, though it may reduce the price for the moment, may thereby very powerfully stimulate consumption, and thus increase the demand until the price again rises, and the profit of the dealer becomes larger than ever. We have seen this frequently follow reductions of taxation; indeed, it has become an axiom in our fiscal system that reduction of taxation is followed by increased consumption. It is, therefore, of much importance to inquire whether the fall which has taken place in the prices of raw materials and of food is caused by an increase of supply or by a decrease of demand. As regards wheat, in which the fall since the beginning of the year has been about 2½ per cent., there can, of course, be no doubt. Although the last harvest was not a very good one, it was much better than the harvest of 1879, not only here at home but all over Europe; and in the United States the area sown was larger, while the yield was quite equal to that of the three previous years. It may be said generally that all over the world the production of food was abundant last year. There has thus been a less demand from Europe for the wheat and other necessary articles of food of the United States and other new countries, while the supply of those countries has been even larger than before. And as this augmented supply followed upon three preceding good years, the stock to be disposed of must have been very large. There has, therefore, been an anxiety on the part of the producers to sell, without any corresponding eagerness on the part of the consumers to buy, and necessarily, therefore, the price of almost all grains has fallen. Since the beginning of the year, as we have already said, the price of wheat has fallen 2½ per cent. and that of barley 5 per cent.; but this fall, so far from being an indication of bad trade, is in reality a most important factor in the generation of good trade. It means, in fact, that the mass of the population obtain their food cheaper than they did last year, that consequently they have more money to spend upon other articles, and that sooner or later, therefore, the demand of the working classes for the commodities which they usually buy must increase. In the same way we find that, since the beginning of the year the wholesale price of beef has fallen 10 per cent.; of butter also 10 per cent.; of cocoa and coffee 2½ per cent.; and of sugar 5 per cent. Thus, what is true of wheat is true all round of the articles of food usually consumed by the working classes. They are all cheaper than they were three months ago, and, therefore, the wages of the working classes go further. There is a larger surplus fund after the food of their families is provided for to be spent upon clothes and other items, and, therefore, as we have said, the demand for these articles must increase by and by, unless, indeed, there is a sudden diminution in the demand for labour itself, which we see no reason to anticipate. On the contrary, this greater spending power on the part of the working classes is a guarantee that the demand for labour must

increase, since augmented purchasing by working-men means augmented employment by those from whom the purchases are made.

The fall in the prices of the raw materials of manufacture is, to some extent, also caused by increased supply. Thus, for example, the cotton crop of the United States last year was of enormous magnitude, very much larger, indeed, than was believed at the time, and consequently, although the consumption of cotton has continued, and even has increased, the price of the raw material yet has fallen as much as 7½ per cent. We have more than once called attention in these columns to the enormous exports of cotton piece goods to India and to the Far East generally since the return of good times. These exports have continued to increase up to the present time and the exports to the Continent and the other countries of the world have also considerably augmented. Thus, in the first three months of the current year, the exports of cotton yarn and twist exceed those of the first quarter of 1880 by nearly 10½ million lbs.; and the exports of cotton manufactures exceed those of the first quarter of 1880 by nearly 200 million yards. Yet, as we have said, there has been the great fall stated above in the price of raw cotton. In time, it is clear, there must be a recovery. The present cheapness, in fact, is stimulating consumption, and the consumption will probably increase until it overtakes the augmented production. Turning now to the next great article which shows a fall in price, we find a somewhat different state of things. The fall in the price of pig-iron since the beginning of the year has been 6 per cent., and in bars and sheets 5 per cent.; but in iron there has been both an increase of production and a decrease of consumption. From the Cleveland Iron Trade Association's statistics it appears that there are 120 furnaces now in blast against 110 at the end of March last year, and that the make of pig-iron is now consequently much larger. There has been likewise an increase in Scotland, and, indeed, in all the iron districts. But the extraordinary demand from the United States has entirely fallen away. For example, the United States bought from us last month only 31,700 tons of pig-iron, against 106,300 tons in the March of last year; and only 6,400 tons of old metal against 44,900 tons last year. No doubt there is an increase elsewhere; but still the decrease is enormous. There is increase also in ship-building, in the exports of millwork and machinery, and in the exports of railway iron. And there is a considerable increase in the home consumption, as we think could be proved if we could afford the space to it here. But still there is no doubt that the consumption of iron is very much less than it was in the first three months of 1880. With the decreased consumption and increased production, a fall of prices is not only natural but inevitable.

From the above review we see no reason to suppose that the check to trade which we have been tracing is permanent. On the contrary, it seems to us to be merely one of those pauses in the onward progress which necessarily must occur from time to time in all trade improvements. Partly, as we have now shown, it is due to a sudden and disproportionately large increase of production; and partly, though in a very much smaller degree, to a decrease in the consumption of some leading articles. But mainly, we are inclined to think, it is to be accounted for by the bad weather that has so long prevailed. The snowstorms, and the heavy rains and floods of January and February, had an influence upon trade somewhat similar to the dissolution last year. And it takes some time for a recovery to set in. This effect has been heightened by the still worse weather in the United States. It is said that the cold, the snowstorms, and the floods throughout the North and North-West have not been equalled for ten years. As an instance of the complete cessation from all out-of-door employment that ensued in large districts, we have seen it stated in the American papers that a train had not arrived at a certain town in the North-West for forty days. When this was so, it is evident that all locomotion must have been nearly impossible, and that buying and selling, and, indeed, the ordinary avocations of life, were to a large extent suspended. Necessarily, this reacted upon the rest of the country. It diminished the earnings of the great lines serving the North-West; it had a paralyzing effect upon the Stock Exchange; it, no doubt, also considerably inconvenienced the banks; and in general it had a depressing effect upon all the markets throughout the country. We are inclined to think, therefore, that the influence of the weather upon trade during the past three months fully accounts for the check which has been witnessed. No doubt, also, the great depression in the landed interest accounts for much. Neither farmers nor landlords are possessed of their usual means of purchasing; and consequently the great agricultural districts have been bad customers of the towns. The banks in the agricultural districts also are crippled for means; and a portion perhaps of the present bareness of the short loan market in London is likewise to be accounted for by the fact that the usual saving is not going on in the agricultural districts, and the savings not being hoarded up, are not deposited in the banks, and are not available for lending and discounting here in London. The depression in the agricultural districts, however, was still greater in 1879 and throughout the greater part of 1880, and yet did not prevent the revival which we have witnessed. We do not doubt, therefore, that in spite of this depression we shall soon see again another outburst of activity in trade.

THE COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE.

THERE is an interesting pamphlet by M. Monval, keeper of the archives at the Théâtre Français, entitled *Les Théâtres subventionnés*. In the midst of the dry but valuable statistics with which it principally deals we come upon the following cynical outburst:—

Qui songerait à nier l'influence que le Théâtre Français exerce dans le monde entier sur le goût, les mœurs, la bonne direction de la littérature dramatique? C'est là une de nos plus pures et de nos plus solides gloires; c'est à la fois une force et une richesse, une de ces patrimoines d'honneur que les peuples doivent se montrer jaloux de conserver et d'agrandir; c'est, ne l'oublions pas, auteurs, artistes, contribuables ou législateurs, un dépôt sacré dont nous sommes comptables à la postérité, pour laquelle ce théâtre sera, dans tous les temps et sous tous les régimes, la grande "Maison de Molière."

This enthusiasm is very natural in one so closely connected with the house as M. Monval is, and it is shared to some extent by most Frenchmen, even by those who, like M. Sarcey, criticize the policy of the present manager most severely. Englishmen, too, who regret that the higher forms of the dramatic art are banished from our stage, or only represented upon it in such a way that one cannot help wishing sometimes that they had been left alone, cast longing eyes towards that splendid house, with its liberal endowment and excellent company, and regret that we have nothing like it at home. We are ourselves among its warmest admirers, and if in the following remarks we criticize severely, we do so as friends, and not as enemies. We wish, in the first place, to take account of a phase through which the Comédie is now passing; and, secondly, to point out that the exceptional advantages which it enjoys are not of themselves sufficient to make it all that its admirers wish it to be, or that it ought to be if it would preserve its high reputation. "Sweet are the uses of adversity"; and we are convinced that, if it had to depend rather more on its own exertions, the result would be better for the French stage, and, in the end, not less profitable from a pecuniary point of view. For the last year or more several leading Parisian newspapers, and notably *Le Temps*, have been attacking the present manager, M. Perrin, in a series of articles so virulent, so persistent in their fault-finding, that it is difficult to imagine that the motives of the writers have been as disinterested as they would have us believe. After all deductions have been made, however, a good deal of solid truth remains. No doubt, as we were told the other day by one who has had the best means of appreciating M. Perrin's qualifications for the post he occupies, he is "a first-rate administrator." The phrase, translated into plain English, means that he has made the Theatre pay as it never paid before. Between 1871 and 1881 the gross receipts have been 15,326,526 francs; as against 9,788,297 francs between 1860 and 1870, when M. Thierry held his post. This is no doubt very agreeable to those who benefit by it, but the public have a right to ask, "Is the most convenient theatre in Paris, a subvention of nearly 10,000*l.* a year, and an assured and honourable position given to *Mesdames et Messieurs les Sociétaires* merely that they may acquire a handsome fortune?" The elevation of the dramatic art by the gathering together of a first-rate company, and the representation of plays written partly by living authors, partly by those whose works have become a part of the literature of France, was formerly thought to be the province of the Théâtre Français. Moreover, it had at one time a noble ambition. It took advantage of its exceptional position to perform pieces that other theatres could not venture upon for fear of failure. On occasion, too, it could greatly dare, and even introduce a new dramatic school to the public, as when it produced the *Hernani* of Victor Hugo and the *Henri III.* et *sa Cour* of Alexandre Dumas. In those days of splendid audacity it had a varied company, that could address itself to the adequate presentation of a piece of almost any class, tragedy, drama, comedy, vaudeville, or farce. This, however, is no longer the case. The older actors are disappearing one after another, and we cannot discover that any serious effort is being made to replace them, either by engaging actors whose reputation has been made at other theatres, or by training beginners. Among the latest secessions we have to mention that of Mlle. Favart, whose admirable performances in London have not been forgotten. The differences between her and M. Perrin have been made public property in a letter which she has addressed to *Le Figaro*. We do not propose to trouble our readers with the details of this miserable squabble; but we cannot allow an actress of her talent to leave a stage with which she had been connected from the outset of her dramatic career without an expression of our sincere regret. She had slowly won her way, by dint of persevering hard work, from the lowest to the highest place, and a few years ago was the leading actress of the theatre. By the time that she had attained to eminence and popularity she was no longer young. But she had power, intensity, and a beautiful voice. In those days Racine and Corneille were in temporary eclipse; and in the modern plays that were then fashionable, such as *Paul Forestier* and *Les Faux Menages*, she found passionate parts to which she did full justice. Again, in romantic drama she was excellent. In her *Doña Sol* in *Hernani*, and her *Marion Delorme*, any inevitable shortcomings were more than compensated for by her admirable intelligence, her power of impersonation, and, above all, by her pathos. We can never forget her gestures or her accents at the end of *Marion Delorme*, as she stood silent on the stage, with her back to the audience, motioning the people to stand beside her, before she gathered up her scorn and her

despair into the final line with which she greets Richelieu on his return from the execution of her lover—"Regardez tous, voilà l'homme rouge qui passe!"

But above all we would commemorate her Camille in Musset's strange and tragic play *On ne badine pas avec l'amour*. From beginning to end it was a most highly finished and artistic impersonation. In the opening scenes she was the precise and prim young lady, full of the ideas that had been taught her in the convent; but she knew how to indicate the gradual development of tenderness towards her lover, while affecting to be cold, till in that terrible last scene she positively frightened her audience by the intensity of horror with which she shrieked rather than spoke the last words in which she announces her rival's death—"Elle est morte! adieu, Perdican!" Latterly she had begun to perform older parts, and a few months ago we witnessed her excellent impersonation of Agrippina in Racine's *Britannicus*. Nor could any actress on the French stage pretend to be her rival in the serious characters of Molière. She, however, is gone, and we shall be curious to see how the parts she played in pieces that cannot be laid aside will now be filled. Meanwhile, she has appeared with great success at the Théâtre de la Gaîté as Lucrèce Borgia in Victor Hugo's tragedy, and with her, as Gennaro, appeared young M. Volny, who has been engaged at the Français for the last four years, but has been allowed to appear so seldom that he has asked leave of M. Perrin to accept a post elsewhere. Again, no attempt has been made to replace Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt. The essays of Mlle. Dudley in romantic parts like *Doña Sol* in *Hernani* cannot be endured for long, nor is it likely that Mlle. Bartet will often be seen as Iphigenia in Racine's *Iphigénie en Aulide*, after the experience of a few weeks since. She is an excellent actress of high comedy, but she has neither the mental nor the physical qualifications necessary for tragedy. M. Perrin, however, like Louis XV., appears to contemplate a future deluge with equanimity. The present company will last his time; the public fills the house to see certain well-known performers; why be at the trouble of educating young people to replace them in a future for which his successor, and not himself, will have to provide?

The quality, moreover, of the pieces represented has deteriorated during the last year or so. The higher forms of the drama are hardly, if at all, attempted; and comedies of society, such as *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*, or *Mlle. de la Seiglière*, have taken the place of the works of the elder Dumas, Ponsard, and Victor Hugo. Again, a visitor to Paris who had a fortnight to spare could formerly be certain of seeing a large number of interesting pieces at the Théâtre Français. This is no longer the case. A few pieces are performed over and over again, and usually by the best performers, without taking the precaution of having the parts "under-studied." The result of this method is that when any eminent performer leaves the theatre, a number of admirable plays are of necessity shelved. Notwithstanding the faults above referred to, however, the theatre is always full, in consequence partly of its prestige, partly of an ingenious device imagined by M. Perrin. After the war—when France was in mourning, and "society" gave no parties—he contrived to bring the fashionable world to the Théâtre Français on Tuesdays and Thursdays by inviting a subscription for those nights. The scheme has answered admirably from one point of view; it pays. On those nights the stalls and boxes are filled by an audience who come to see each other, to talk about their own private affairs, or to applaud their favourite actor or actress, but who care very little whether the piece be new or old. Of late the want of variety has excited some comment; but there are discontented persons in every society, and a few such grumblers may be neglected. There may be, however, worse faults than mere indifference. The fashionable world hates the Republic and all its supporters; and plays are beginning to be judged, not on their own merits, but according to the political opinions of their authors. We do not, of course, blame M. Perrin for this. We merely state the fact, because it is one of the reasons why the Théâtre Français is to a less degree than formerly the centre of the literary and dramatic life of Paris. We cannot but fear that this system can have but one end, and that a violent one. M. Perrin will one day be succeeded by some one of totally different opinions and perhaps of inferior capacity, who will try to make radical changes. The result will be that the older performers will resign, and he will be left with a young company, ignorant of the traditions, and deprived of the steadiness that a judicious admixture of veterans must always give to any body of persons who are expected to act together. For some years the performances will deteriorate in quality, and the receipts will fall off. In the long run, however, the dramatic art may gain by the revolution.

REVIEWS.

METTERNICH'S MEMOIRS.—VOLS. III. AND IV.*

THE volumes of Prince Metternich's Memoirs now published carry the reader from the Peace of Vienna to the end of the Russo-Turkish war in 1829. Metternich's autobiography did not

* *Memoirs of Prince Metternich, 1815-1829.* Edited by Prince Richard Metternich. Translated by Mrs. Alexander Napier. Vols. III. and IV. London: Richard Bentley. 1881.

extend beyond 1815, and the present volumes only contain State Papers addressed by Metternich to the Emperor Francis as to the representation of Austria in different countries, and a few of Metternich's letters to his family. They certainly throw some light on the history of the period, for it is impossible to say that records of the opinions of the man who guided Austria when Austria to a large extent guided Europe are utterly barren of information or importance. But their historical value is not great enough to counterbalance their intrinsic emptiness. As a piece of reading they are wearisome almost beyond endurance. Not that Metternich did not write fairly well, or that any fault is to be found with the translation, which is easy, flowing, and clear. But, whatever may be his immediate subject, Prince Metternich has really only three things to say—that he maintains eternal and immutable principles of right; that no one else knows how to maintain them; and that he maintains them in a way worthy of a being who has attained the summit of human knowledge, wisdom, and virtue. Praise of himself, praise of his own principles, praise of his own conduct, praise of his own success, fill up page after page of this new instalment of Metternich's Memoirs. So great a man was necessarily a solitary one. He stood alone, with no equal and no second, although he condescended to recognize the existence of a few worthy to work with or under him, such as his devoted Gentz and our own George IV. The King of Prussia was beneath his serious notice; the Emperor Alexander he thought a well-intentioned goose. Fortunately for the reader, there arose a man who broke the serenity of Metternich's gigantic egotism. Canning crossed his path, and Canning could not be despised. He could only be abused and hated, and Metternich hated Canning with all the fervent hatred that can rankle in the breast of a man with noble principles and intense vanity. Canning, in fact, broke the spell which Metternich had thrown over Europe. He asserted principles almost exactly opposite to the principles of Metternich, and for a quarter of a century the history of Europe was the history of Europe gradually adopting the principles of Canning and abandoning the principles of Metternich. How great and how beneficial the influence of Canning was, not only to England, but to the world, is revealed in these volumes more clearly than perhaps it was ever revealed before. Metternich was at the zenith of his success in 1823, when he held the last of the five Congresses in which his noble principles found their full expression. Canning came on the scene, or, as Metternich poetically put it, a baleful meteor began to burn in the European sky. Things were much less pleasant to Metternich. His principles did not seem to hold their old supremacy. His advice was not listened to in the old way. He knew he was as wise as ever, but the world did not seem to see it as it had done. And then came the war between Turkey and Russia, and this was very annoying to Metternich. Nothing, perhaps, ever puzzled Metternich so much as the Greek insurrection. It would not square conveniently with his noble principles. The chief of these principles was that all insurrections ought to be summarily put down, not only by the Government against which they were directed, but by all Governments combined. The Greeks were insurgents, and ought to be suppressed by Turkey if Turkey could suppress them, and, if not, by all the Powers. But the duty of suppressing all insurrections was put forward by its preachers as an eminently Christian duty. The triumph of absolutism was the triumph of Christianity; and how could Christianity be sure it was triumphing if absolutism kept Christians under the yoke of Mussulmans? Metternich wavered, and could not help wavering. In the main he thought that the interests of absolutism ought to hold the first place. The example of any Government putting down any insurrection was too precious to be lost. But he could never bring himself to be quite so bitter against Greek insurgents as against other insurgents. And then, while the Greek question was still unsettled, Russia insisted on going to war with the Porte. This was very trying to Metternich, not so much because Russia went to war, as because it went to war without taking his advice or submitting to his directions. The course taken by Russia revealed the secret that the members of the Holy Alliance would act each for himself, if it suited his convenience to do so. In point of principles the Emperor Nicholas was as fit a member of the Holy Alliance as Metternich could have wished. No absolutist could have hoped that a more complete absolutist would ever sit on a throne. But when the Czar wanted to do a thing he did it without troubling himself whether Metternich, the mainspring of the Holy Alliance, liked it or not. The principles of Canning and the perverse independence of Nicholas made a fatal inroad into the Holy Alliance; and thenceforward Metternich had less and less influence in Europe, and could only shut himself up in narrower limits and apply his noble principles to Austria and to Germany.

During the two years which immediately followed the peace, Metternich was principally engaged in making a tour in Italy. The letters and State papers which he sent home during the tour are not of any great interest now. On the whole, he felt that he could take a cheerful view of things. There was some discontent in Italy but Metternich thought that it could be allayed by a few simple changes or anticipated by a few simple precautions. These changes and precautions were so exceedingly simple that it is not surprising to find that the man who devised them, and believed they would be efficacious, felt a pleasant lightness of heart. He suggested that it would be desirable that the Courts of the Italian provinces of Austria should not be exclusively filled with German judges, and that the children of re-

spectable Tuscans might be allowed to learn the *Humaniora* without official interference if their parents wished them to do so. The inhabitants of the Italian provinces were, he owned, dissatisfied at being suddenly included in the limits of the Austrian customs; but he thought that this dissatisfaction might have been prevented if the Government had taken care to have samples of Bohemian manufactures in the principal towns. Purchasers who were not allowed to buy any but Austrian goods, and could find no Austrian goods to buy, were certainly in an unhappy position. In the wider sphere of European politics France was powerless, for the occupation still continued; Prussia had such need of the "moral support" of Austria, that she need not be counted. England, by sanctioning the abolition of the Sicilian Constitution and by giving Genoa to Piedmont, had placed herself humbly in the wake of Austria; and Russia alone remained to be watched. The Czar was still in what, according to Metternich's views, was an unregenerate state. He had ceased to be a Jacobin, but he had become a mystic; and mysticism was in Metternich's eyes worse, if possible, than Jacobinism. It was England that Europe had to thank for the introduction of this new poison; for its fountain-head was Methodism, and its most pestiferous mode of action was the spreading of the reading of the Bible. What Metternich called the *maladie biblique* was always offending him. He considered the subject, as he considered every subject, from the point of his own high philosophy. Personally he read a chapter or two every day in Luther's translation, and got no harm from it; but then he had gone through a great intellectual struggle to attain this immunity. When he was young the imprudent study of the Bible had put him into a state of mind something between that of an atheist and that of Chateaubriand; but as he got older, and his mind became absorbed in practical politics, he found that he could read the Bible without thinking about it, and that an immense amount of time and trouble was saved by simply accepting the teaching of the Church. This was the result at which he, being a very wise man, had arrived; but most men were not wise, and therefore he thought it his duty to protect them against the risk of being led astray. His contempt for the Czar was unbounded when he heard that Alexander had done a thing so absurd in a sovereign as to countenance Bible Societies. But he was possessed by a comforting belief that it was only necessary for Metternich to speak in order to divert the Czar from his nonsensical fancies. "The Emperor Alexander," he said, when writing to the Emperor Francis, "will assuredly cease to love and care for such narrow-minded Christians when I, as your Majesty's Minister, represent your Majesty's views." As to the views of Metternich and his royal mouthpiece there could be no mistake. Metternich had, and enjoyed, the triumph of refuting an atrocious calumny that Austria had suppressed a Bible Society by proving that this was impossible, as Austria had never allowed a Bible Society to exist.

In 1818 began what the editor of these volumes calls the Lustrum of the Congress—that is, for five years Metternich got up one Congress after another, laid down the law, enforced it, and was regarded by many important persons, and always by himself, as the wisest, greatest, and best man in Europe. 1818 was the year of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle; and already, before it met, Metternich felt himself appreciated. "I have become," he writes to his wife in the September of that year, "a species of moral power in Germany, and perhaps even in Europe." But at no time was his course in this triumphant *lustrum* quite smooth. In the earlier part of the period he was doubtful how far he could manage Russia, and in the latter part England seemed visibly falling away from him. In August he wrote to the Emperor Francis that "the Czar and his Cabinet give themselves up more and more every day to proselytizing. Hence the many intrigues, great and small, so irritating to us and most other Governments." But, in spite of these sad proclivities of Russia, the Congress, as a whole, showed a most satisfactory spirit. "Sovereigns and Ministers," as Gentz summed up the result, "understood what the common good required. They put aside every other consideration to preserve authority in the shipwreck by saving the people from their own follies." 1819 was the year of the Carlsbad Conference, when the German Powers met after the assassination of Kotzebue, and when Metternich got the leading members of the Bund to agree to three important measures—the suppression of University freedom, the suppression of the independence of the press, and the appointment of a central Commission of Investigation at Mayence. His success on this occasion amply justified his conviction that he had become a species of moral power in Germany, for the assembled Ministers sent him a letter, in which they testified that, "when he heard the audacious, fatally prophetic clamour of licentious writers and the news of a crime, in which superficial or prejudiced observers could only see an isolated action, he discerned, with equal clearness, the depth of the evil and the means of meeting it; and what they had there achieved and called into life was only the realization of what he then designed." The conclusions of the Conference of Carlsbad were communicated to and confirmed by the other Powers engaged in keeping up order in Europe, and their approval was given at the Conference of Vienna in 1820. Metternich, on the eve of this Conference, wrote that he had sometimes been reproached by Lord Castlereagh for not pushing things forward, and that others had made the extraordinary charge against him of "too great liberalism." But he would now show what was in him, and he pronounced his scheme, when he had got it accepted, to be "a legislative work of the very highest order." Scarcely, however, was the Confer-

ence at an end when an event occurred which put to the test whether the arbiters of Europe meant really to act up to their principles or not. A revolution broke out at Naples, and the King had to retire from his kingdom. A Conference was held at the end of December 1820 at Troppau, when Austria, Russia, and Prussia agreed that the King should be invited to come to Laybach, and then invite the Great Powers to put him on his throne again. They stated that France and England might be expected to give their consent, "since the principle on which the invitation rests is in perfect harmony with the agreement formerly concluded there." This may have been very true; but England was not in the same mood. The King had become very unpopular, owing to the Queen's trial; the Opposition was much strengthened; Lord Castlereagh could no longer do everything he wished; the Duke of Wellington had a great objection to interfering in the affairs of small nations, and England finally decided to decline. Metternich was, however, perfectly convinced that he, and perhaps he alone, knew what was wanted to save society; and in the end of 1820 he laid before the Emperor Francis a sort of elaborate confession of his political faith, the keynote of which was "a league between all Governments against factions in all States." Full of this formula, he had the delight of meeting in October 1821 a thoroughly kindred spirit in George IV., who was then visiting Hanover. The King praised the Emperor, whom he styled "Our Emperor," and Metternich to the skies, and ended with a frightful explosion against his own Ministry, especially against Lord Liverpool, but entirely excepting Lord Castlereagh, whom he described as a faithful, vigorous man, quite devoted to the good cause, as proof of which he concluded by saying to Metternich, "He understands you; he is your friend; that says everything." The two friends got on so well together that Metternich wrote that he made it part of his business to prepare for the fall of the Liverpool Ministry, and to reconstruct a Ministry, under Lord Castlereagh's leadership, "devoted to the cause or us, which is the same thing." Metternich appears to have believed in perfect good faith that England stood in the same relation to Austria that Prussia did, and that he and George IV. could make any Ministry they liked in England, and keep it in office. Things, however, turned out badly. Lord Londonderry committed suicide in August 1822, just when he was coming to Verona, where a new Congress was met to declare a new sentence of monarchs against Spain. Metternich was sincerely shocked at the sad occurrence; but he had the satisfaction of pronouncing over his departed friend what to him seemed the highest eulogy that earth had to bestow—"Londonderry was the only man in his country who had gained any experience in foreign affairs; he had learned to understand me."

A remarkable letter from Metternich to the Emperor Francis, written in 1829, concludes the fourth volume of his Memoirs, and sums up the chief results of the years which had intervened between the first break-down of Metternich's policy in 1823, to the time when, as he fondly hoped, the end had come of the sad struggle to which he had been exposed by the perversity of Russia. Canning had broken altogether away from the wholesome sway of right principles. Then Russia had openly shattered the peace which it was the chief aim of Metternich to preserve. England had joined with Russia in declaring in favour of Greece, and France ultimately assented, and thus the Triple Alliance was formed altogether outside of the old European alliance, and proceeded on principles which Metternich thought detestable. Instead of all Governments combining to put down all factions, some Governments were combining to help a faction. This was a challenge to Metternich and his policy of the most direct kind. Metternich knew that it was, and candidly explained in his letter why he had not accepted it. He would very much like to have imposed peace on Europe, but he had not the means. Austria had not got the money or the men to impose on her neighbours the policy she thought best for her and for them. He had been made very happy by the opportune death of Canning, but he was obliged to own that this release from the utter misery which Canning had caused him was not so fruitful of blessing as he had hoped; for the Duke of Wellington, otherwise so admirable, had no true notion of foreign affairs, and had got so firmly into his head the notion that the old European alliance was dead that Metternich could not persuade him that it was as much alive as ever. The Duke happened to be right. The day for ruling Europe by Congresses in which all Governments combined against all factions had gone by, never to return to the last hour of Metternich's long life. But Metternich could never believe that he was mistaken. In 1829 he thought that everything looked very bright. There had been a temporary departure from his policy, but the bad time had passed. In England there was the Wellington Ministry, which, if not very wise, had at least a firm grasp on right principles, and the Marquess of Hertford—with whom Metternich was delighted, and whom he pronounced to be among the most independent, thoughtful, and clever of his English acquaintance—had told him confidentially that he and his friends were going to exert their vast dormant power, and put down the movement for Reform once for all. Russia had ended its perturbing action against Turkey, and in France Polignac was Minister, and he was one of whom Metternich could say, "he holds our opinions thoroughly." As Metternich summed up the situation, "Every power that is inclined to return to the original principle of the European alliance, as well as to the system of which it is the basis, must join with Austria; and that this sooner or later must be done is evident from the nature of things, and from the unmistakable necessities of this age." These were the views of the one

wise man in Europe on the eve of the French Revolution, of the English Reform Bill, of the creation of Belgium, of the French occupation of Ancona. Somehow the nature of things and the necessities of the age would not operate as they ought to have done. Canning, as Metternich wrote on one occasion, "tried to kill me, whereas I killed him and his acolytes." The sense in which Metternich meant that he had killed Canning was evidently that his principles and that of Canning had come into collision, and that he had triumphed, and among the acolytes of Canning whom he had killed must have been Palmerston. Throughout Europe there was no one prophesying more blindly as to the future than this man, who was profoundly convinced that he was gifted with almost more than human wisdom. This very blindness, however, this limit of his range, this conviction of his wisdom had largely contributed to his success during the years when he was successful. He was no doubt favoured by the times, for Europe was stunned by the long Napoleon wars, and dreaded above all things new disturbances; but it was Metternich who gave shape to the thoughts of the ruling classes, and who fashioned others to his will, because, while others doubted, he never doubted; while others shrank from action, he was resolute; and because he alone had an intense and unchanging persuasion that he had got hold of great truths and was born to establish their dominion.

WOOLING A SWEETBRIAR.*

IN a recent novel we have a lively picture given us of a dress-maker's work-room, with a young man who occupies his leisure hours in reading out highly-spiced romances to the busy "young ladies." In such a circle we feel certain that *Wooring a Sweetbriar* would have received a hearty welcome. The dress-maker's apprentices would have revelled in the descriptions of aristocratic life, in the elegant costumes of the ladies, in the jocularities of the gentlemen, only—for constancy is the ideal virtue (in fiction) of the working classes—they would have been shocked at the levity with which the fascinating hero pays devoted attention to a beauty and an heiress, while his affections were unalterably engaged elsewhere.

We should certainly have felt very much surprised had a novel with such a silly name as *Wooring a Sweetbriar* turned out clever or interesting; but we were not prepared for anything quite so improbable or dull as this tale proves to be. It opens at a "quiet place" in Paris where "respectable citizens" come and drink coffee and smoke and listen to the band, and here the heroine, Linda Cavaye, accidentally renews her acquaintance with her father, who has been for twelve years in India. Now a place frequented by "respectable citizens" is the very last spot that would have been favoured with the presence of "the Hon. Captain Frederick Cavaye, younger brother of the Earl of Glenlindon," who "showed his breeding in every line of his chiselled features"; still less was it likely to have been visited by his friend Sir Edward Gore, who, "though a baronet with a goodly line of distinguished ancestors, bore no outward visible signs of his good birth." The experienced novel reader will find no difficulty in detecting Captain Cavaye's character and position in the story, after discovering his military rank. No man could be a captain at forty-two, even before the recent regulations, without being a scamp who has but a secondary part to play. Had he been intended for the hero, he would have been a colonel fifteen years before, or, had he been the virtuous parent, we should have found him a general, if not a K.C.B. Captain Cavaye, therefore, beneath his "pleasant exterior" conceals every vice that was ever united by a mature captain and a younger son of an earl. His "breeding" extends no further than his looks, for he grossly insults his sister-in-law and her husband, who have brought up his daughter for twelve years, and then abruptly carries Linda off to visit among his own relations, with the avowed object of marrying her as speedily as possible. On the journey homewards he exposes her to the offensive admiration of Sir Edward Gore, who informs her pleasantly that "he would rather be scolded by her than kissed by any one else." Captain Cavaye does his best to make her ask for money from any one who seems likely to give it to her. Twelve years' absence from this attractive person does not seem to have done as much for Linda as we could have wished. She first engages herself to her cousin, Will Jones, though of course the reader at once knows no heroine would be allowed to marry a young man with such a plebeian name, but, on her arrival in England, promptly falls in love with another cousin, Lord Kilmara, the future Earl of Glenlindon. Lord Kilmara is deeply in debt, and has no pecuniary expectations except from his aunt, so he dares not propose to her, though this trifling omission does not prevent many endearments from passing between them. Unhappily, however, Lord Kilmara does not confine his caresses to the lady with whom, for the time being, he really fancies himself in love. Partly to blind his rich aunt, and partly to amuse himself, he flirts vigorously all though a ball with another young lady, Eva Venables, and suddenly, on the balcony, seizes her in his arms and kisses her wildly. This Eva Venables is the type of everything that the author thinks gentle and womanly, but she resents the insult very mildly indeed, though she herself is the *fiancée* of one Charlie Egerton, and is madly in love with him. This young

* *Wooring a Sweetbriar*. A Novel. By Lolo, Author of "A Cruel Secret." 3 vols. London: Tinsley Brothers. 1881.

man is as penniless as all the characters in the book that have not 60,000*l.* a year. Eva's father is a very poor curate, whose head is not unnaturally turned by succeeding to a baronetcy and to the above-mentioned large income. It would be an immense relief to all thoughtful and imaginative people if these turns of fortune's wheel could be accomplished in some other way than by the invariable drowning of a distant cousin and his two sons, heirs to the title and estate. Could not the family go up in a balloon, and discover something wrong with the apparatus; or might they not be all seized with a sudden feeling of patriotism, and volunteer, and be killed in one of our foreign wars? Any variety would be welcome. Sir Dalton Venables and his two sons, however, dispose of themselves in the regulation way, and Eva becomes the heiress to the family property. Her father has always disapproved of her engagement with Mr. Egerton, and now availed himself of the first excuse to act like the father in the poem:—

Once he loved you, loved you blindly,
But papa behaved unkindly,
Gave poor Reginald his congé,
One evening in the *salle à manger*.

Linda meanwhile had been pursuing her career of conquest and, let us add, of kissing, in an uninterrupted way. The only man she did not flirt with was Sir Edward Gore, who, besides being short, ugly, and horsey-looking, knew not how to draw the line between "broad familiarity and coarse rudeness." We should have imagined that there was no such line to be drawn, and that if there was, that it was equally unperceived by the rest of the characters; but then we are ignorant of the manners and customs of the circles in which the Cavayes moved. Sir Edward still wished to marry her, and her father still urged the match; but Linda held out, in spite of threats, and even blows, so Captain Cavaye takes her with him to try her luck in the happy hunting grounds of Edinburgh. Here she makes friends with a young lady of sixteen, "well meaning, but utterly unprincipled," and spends her days on the tops of drags, and her evenings in ball-rooms. In reading *Wooring a Sweetbriar* we could almost fancy the days of Erasmus had returned, so regularly on every public occasion do the principal persons salute each other, though without the purity and sweetness of their dispositions suffering in the least. The result of this behaviour in the case of Linda is that one young man with whom she has gone these lengths, and then refused, commits suicide—a fact which is thrown in her teeth in ordinary conversation for the rest of her life. We will give a specimen of the delicate observations made to her by the Rev. Sir Horace Venables, a few months after the event had occurred:—

"I fancy you knew a gentleman of the name of Edwards, in Edinburgh, Miss Cavaye, did you not?"

He had met a friend the day before, who had related the story of poor Edwards's death—with a good deal of exaggeration respecting Miss Cavaye's share in it—to him, and he was anxious to ascertain how far the report was correct, for, if it proved to be so, Miss Cavaye was not exactly the sort of friend he would choose for his daughter, though she was Glenlindon's cousin. So he took the above delicate way of approaching the subject, staring hard at Linda with his cold grey eyes as he spoke.

The girl, who had also been indulging in a reverie, roused herself with a slight start, and answered steadily, though the blood suddenly forsook her lips:—

"Yes, I did."

"He shot himself, I believe?"

"He did." Linda's quivering lips could hardly frame the simple words.

"They say he was crossed in love, or something of that kind." This time the girl essayed no answer whatever, and Sir Horace suffered the subject to drop, convinced by her evident unwillingness to speak on it, that she was in truth the heroine of the Edwards's suicide which had created such a sensation, and on whom the newspapers had heaped such unsparing abuse, though they had not given her name.

It would be too dismal to follow the manoeuvres which drag their weary length through three volumes. The scene is changed periodically from England to the Riviera; but not only are the actors the same, but their mode of acting also. On learning that Eva has become an heiress, Lord Kilmarra, now the Earl of Glenlindon, at once flies to Cannes to pay court to her; and this under the very eyes of Linda Cavaye, with whom he is still "in love." He begins by asking her why she is so unkind to him, and then refers, in the best taste, to the subject of the ball-room kisses:—

"I have wanted to apologise to you for a long time for anything that you may have thought rude in my manner that night. You cannot tell how I regret having offended you. I do not know what possessed me to act as I did; except that you looked so tantalizingly pretty; and I had known you so intimately ever since you were a child, that I had come to regard you almost as I did any of my cousins. I never thought you would be so angry with me; Lady Flora Wilton and heaps of other girls would only have laughed and treated it as a joke. I think you took it rather too seriously, Miss Venables; and then, when you refused to dance with me, I got angry too, and was too proud to apologise, as I had intended doing. But say you forgive me now, and I will never do anything that can vex you again."

After much perseverance on his part, he is unwillingly accepted, just when Linda's fortunes are at the lowest ebb, for her father has committed forgery, and is now living by cheating at cards at Nice. When all their money is gone, and Linda has declined either to ask any one for more, or to act as decoy to the young men about the place, Captain Cavaye deserts his daughter, who rushes to Geneva to throw herself into the arms of Lord Glenlindon. He tells her that he regrets to say he has promised to marry the heiress; but, as Linda promptly falls ill of brain fever, he reconsiders the situation, and everything ends happily.

Such is the outline of *Wooring a Sweetbriar*. We cannot stigmatize the characters as unnatural, because in many cases they represent a state of society which does undoubtedly exist, a society which, while keeping the letter of the commandments, perpetually breaks them in the spirit. There is hardly one relationship in *Wooring a Sweetbriar* which is not distorted into something hideous. Aunts are jealous of their nieces, young men openly accuse the girls of whom they think most highly of throwing themselves at their heads and laying traps for them, young ladies are unable to resist their own vanity and to be true to what they know is right. Dignity or reticence is, of course, absolutely wanting among people of this sort, and they seem to have lost the sense of care for their own reputation, which outlasts care for the reputation of others. It is not often a father is so lacking in decency as to tell a stranger who remarks upon the delicate looks of his daughter that she is fretting "about her old lover," or that a gentleman tells his friend, just after he has proposed, that his fiancée is "a stupid little thing." But if we were to begin to dissect the taste of the book our task would be endless.

ODGERS ON LIBEL AND SLANDER.*

MR. BLAKE ODGERS has acquitted himself of an exceedingly difficult and troublesome undertaking in a manner deserving of almost unqualified praise. And if our own approval is thus far guarded in its expression, it is not because we have actually noted any material error or defect, but because it is impracticable for a reviewer to examine critically the whole of a book dealing exhaustively, as this does, with a large and intricate subject. In those parts to which we have given closer attention we have found Mr. Odgers an accurate as well as a diligent writer. The burden of diligence he has imposed upon himself is no ordinary one. His object has been to bring together in an orderly form the whole of the existing authorities on the law of libel and slander, and to state as nearly as possible their results. Thus his work is a Digest in the old sense, in so far as it collects all the cases; but it is also a Digest in the newer sense which has come in of late years, in so far as it extracts the meaning of the cases and embodies it in general propositions. The second part of the task, though it covers less space than the first, is really the more important. As Mr. Odgers truly says in his preface, "a huge collection of reported cases piled one on the top of the other is not a legal treatise, any more than a tumbled pile of bricks is a house"; accordingly he has "attempted to strike a balance, as it were, and state the net result of the authorities." Too many of the books in common use offer us little better than a tumbled pile of bricks. The operation of putting a long series of decisions in order and getting some sort of net result from them is more troublesome than any one would believe who has not done it himself. Mr. Odgers has here carried it through manfully and successfully. So far as we can see, he has never shirked a doubtful point or taken refuge in ambiguous generalities. In dealing with really unsettled questions it might perhaps have been an improvement to state with equal precision and particularity (as Mr. Justice Stephen has once or twice done in his *Digest of the Criminal Law*), both of the opposing views which may still be tenable. On the head of Blasphemy, for example, we think Mr. Justice Stephen's method gives a clearer notion to the reader of what a judge and jury would be likely to do at the present day. But it must always be to some extent a matter of individual judgment how far an attempt to reconcile apparently discordant authorities is worth making.

It would be impossible for us to follow Mr. Odgers through all the matters treated of in his book. We shall select one or two which raise questions of principle not without general interest. The distinction in English law between written and spoken words, as affording a cause of action, has been more than once commented on as unsatisfactory, and there is much reason to believe that, as regards its actual history, it is a casual result of the manner in which jurisdiction in cases of libel and slander was acquired by the civil courts. An ingenious argument to this effect was contributed to the *American Law Review* in 1872 by Mr. St. John Green, and has been adopted by Mr. Melville Bigelow in his *Leading Cases on the Law of Torts*—a valuable work too little known in this country. Mr. Odgers, on the other hand, thinks the distinction justified by the reason commonly given, that written or printed matter has naturally and necessarily more publicity and permanence than spoken words. But this omits to notice that the quality of the persons to whose knowledge a defamation comes may be far more important to the party's feelings or reputation than their mere numbers. A libel in a newspaper may be extremely offensive and injurious to a well-known man conversant with educated people, when the very same statement, made in the same manner of an obscure man whose kinsfolk and friends are illiterate, might do him far less harm than oral communication. To speak ill of a man in a newspaper which his acquaintance do not read surely is a less injury than to speak ill of him to their faces. It is a strange conclusion, again, that a slander should be deemed less mischievous because (as may be the case) it is so vile that the utterer cannot get it printed and dares not commit

* *A Digest of the Law of Libel and Slander; with the Evidence, Procedure, and Practice, both in Civil and Criminal Cases, and Precedents of Pleadings.* By W. Blake Odgers, M.A., M.D., &c. London: Stevens & Sons. 1881.

himself to writing it. On the whole, we think the rule of law should be the same for spoken and for written words, and the manner and extent of publication, whether by speaking, writing, or printing, whether by private communications or by the public press, whether in an ordinary course of dealing or with a special purpose of injury, should be considered only for the purpose of awarding damages. Or, if there are to be fixed differences, the principal one in our opinion should be, not between written and spoken words, but between matter published and matter not published; understanding publication in its common and popular sense, not in the technical and often unnatural one which it has gradually acquired in this branch of the law. There are one or two other points as to which Mr. Odgers does not think it needful to be astute to justify the existing state of things. Such is the rule that spoken imputations of immorality, however gross, are not actionable without special damage; though perhaps a reason for this, too, might be discovered with a little ingenuity. For mere foul-mouthed abuse will hardly beget in impartial bystanders any other opinion than that the person uttering it is in a state incompatible with being the witness of truth; and thus the person to or concerning whom the words are uttered is not damaged. But if the hearers of such matter perchance lightly believe it, they show themselves to be a sort of people whose good opinion is not worth having, and, by consequence, the loss of it is no damage; unless, indeed, the party's known character be such as to make the description antecedently credible, which is as much as to say that he or she has no character to lose. If this plea for the common law fail to carry conviction to our readers, we can but assure them that there are worse in Blackstone. As regards the special question of the position of newspaper editors and publishers who have issued libellous matter in good faith, in the course of truthful reports of speeches made at meetings and the like, Mr. Odgers does not agree with the recommendations lately made by a Select Committee of the House of Commons. He thinks that no further extension of the description of privileged matter or occasions is needed, and that the best reform of procedure would be to abolish prosecutions by indictment altogether in libel cases. The procedure by information would then remain as an auxiliary to the ordinary civil remedy, which Mr. Odgers proposes should not be, as it now is, excluded by it. A criminal remedy of some sort must be retained, as Mr. Odgers points out, if only because many libellers of the worst kind are not worth powder and shot in a civil action, and indeed regard it as a desirable advertisement.

An excellent feature of Mr. Odgers's work is that he wholly sweeps away the cumbrous and idle fiction of "malice in law." What is called "malice in law" means, as he justly says, nothing else than the absence of lawful excuse. But where there is lawful excuse there is no wrong; so that, in this sense, every actionable wrong is malicious, and to say that it is maliciously committed is mere surplusage. The fact that you bring an action shows that you maintain the defendant's word or deed to be both wrong on the face of it, and not justifiable by any matter of excuse or privilege applicable to the conduct complained of. Probably the habit of alleging malice arose from the opinion found in some of the older cases, but now overruled, that to make spoken words actionable some proof must be given that they were spoken with ill-will; in other words, that what is now called "malice in fact," or "express malice," was a necessary ingredient of the wrong. Mr. Odgers's handling of the matter is identical in principle with that of Mr. Justice Stephen in his *Digest of the Criminal Law*, where, however, the word "maliciously" is retained, perhaps in order the more effectually to expose its absurdity. Fair comments on subjects of public interest are dealt with by Mr. Odgers, we may here note, not under the head of privilege, but in connexion with the general question, What amounts to defamation? The correct view, he maintains, is not that criticism of matters of public concern is privileged, but that fair criticism of such matters is no libel. For, "if such criticism was privileged in the strict sense of the words, it would in every case be necessary for the plaintiff to prove actual malice, however false and however injurious the strictures may have been; while the defendant would only have to prove that he honestly believed the charges himself in order to escape liability; and this clearly is not the law." This reason is, we think, a good one. It would be still better, though a text-writer could hardly attempt it, to get rid of "privilege" altogether as a technical term. Fair comment on what is fairly open to public comment is no libel. Other statements which otherwise would be libellous may be justified by showing that they are true, or they may be excused by the occasion. Some few occasions afford an excuse, even if the statement is not believed to be true by the person making it. These are said to be absolutely privileged. Others have this effect only if the statement is made with belief in its truth, and with some other motive than ill-will to the person affected by it. In these cases there is said to be qualified privilege. To all practical intents the difference between occasions of absolute and of qualified privilege is much greater than between occasions not privileged in any sense, and occasions privileged in one or other of the above-named senses. Privilege, therefore, as a general term, gives an awkward or misleading cross-division; if retained at all, it should be limited to what is now called "absolute privilege." The rational title to include all the cases would be justification and excuse, under which the topics might be arranged in the following order:—1. Truth in substance and in fact. 2. Fair comment on matter of public interest. 3. Communications or reports made in good faith and on proper occasions ("qualified privilege"). 4. Statements made in Par-

liament, in discharge of official duty, or in the course of judicial proceedings ("absolute privilege").

It is well known to lawyers that the law of libel and slander, especially slander, has a sufficiently comic side. The severely technical character of Mr. Odgers's book has not allowed him to call attention to this directly. But we judge from passages like the following that the humours of the subject have not escaped him:—

Is it a publication if a man tells his wife what he thinks of his neighbours? . . . The question seems never to have arisen in England; probably because in every such case there has been an immediate and undoubted publication of the same slander, or an exaggerated version thereof, by the wife to some third person; for which the husband would be equally answerable in damages, and which would be easier to prove.

One use to which an idly curious reader might put this Digest is to discover how much vituperation of his neighbour he might safely indulge in without risk of an action. There is a tradition on the Northern Circuit of two members of the mess who on a Grand Night exchanged unactionable compliments for a considerable time. We know not if their exploits are fully recorded, and probably great part of them would be unquotable if they were. But we may suggest the following general description as probably safe to speak (though not to write) of a country gentleman in the commission of the peace, not called to the Bar, and carrying on no particular business:—

He is a runagate rogue, a villain, a varlet, and a cozening knave. He hath as much law as a Jackanapes; he is a bankrupt fellow not worth three half-pence; he hath but one manor, and that he got by swearing and forswearing; he is a logger-headed, slouch-headed, bursen-bellied hound, an ass and a beetle-headed justice. He is a scamping rascal, and stole the parish bell-ropes when he was churchwarden; he stole a growing tree worth forty shillings from Farmer Stiles's meadow, and a hoghead of water from his pond, and poisoned his pigs with mustard and brimstone.

We do not answer for every one of these epithets as being certainly not actionable at the present day, and in any case it must be left to the speaker's discretion whether there is any chance of special damage ensuing and being provable. Above all, variations are dangerous; for example, though you may without fear tax a churchwarden with stealing the parish bell-ropes, it will not do to say of him that he cheated the parish of their value, nor to call him a thief in general. He that would learn more of this excellent distinction, let him turn to Jackson v. Adams in the second volume of Bingham's *New Cases*.

THREE MILITARY BOOKS.*

MR. TOMASSON was much disappointed by the results of the Zulu war. We fear he must have been still more chagrined by the terms of peace made with the Boers. For Mr. Tomasson holds, and holds strongly, that "Africa should become to us a second India, and should be British from Table Bay to Cape Guardafui." He prophesies "such it will be, spite of all the clamour of a section at home"; he explains to all the sections "we are, to a barbarism a thousandfold greater than that of India, the pioneers of Christianity and civilization"; and he concludes his volume by inquiring of the pioneers—"Should we pause in our glorious career?" The recall of Sir Bartle Frere in response to the clamour of a section was very much calculated to throw a damper upon Mr. Tomasson's exuberant hopes. In that enterprising statesman he had recognized the nation's first and greatest pioneer, one who he might confidently expect would be giving orders at an early date to Adjutant Tomasson and the irregular horse of the flying column to free the continent of Africa from Table Bay to Cape Guardafui. "History," however, says our author, "will look after Sir Bartle's reputation"; and we have no doubt such will be the case. With history and prophecy both on his side Mr. Tomasson can afford to wait awhile for the full realization of his programme.

Colonel Buller's irregulars were composed of men of no less than nineteen nationalities, besides Jews of all nations. "Discharged soldiers and 'Varsity men, unfrocked clergyman and sailor, cockney and countryman, cashiered officers of army and navy, here rubbed shoulders." It is no wonder that it required "long months of anxious work" on the part of Colonel and officers to bring this heterogeneous material "to its best form." Mr. Tomasson must be well qualified to pass an opinion, and he tells us that Danes make the best, and Americanized Irish the worst, soldiers. It is a mistake to suppose that the most efficient irregular corps is necessarily made up of the most irregular people. Under a man like Colonel Buller, unfrocked clergymen and cashiered officers have very carefully to mind their p's and q's; and an irregular force is never so efficient as when in the matter of discipline it is most like a regular one. Mr. Tomasson gives us a spirited account of various combats in which he was engaged in Zululand—amongst others of Ulundi; various details concerning the poor Prince Imperial, whom he met more than once; and some observations on the Boer outbreak. There is an amusing anecdote concerning Oham's wives when that astute brother to Cetewayo came over to our

* With the *Irregulars in the Transvaal and Zululand*. By W. H. Tomasson, late Adjutant of Irregular Cavalry. London: Remington.

The *Light Cavalry Brigade in the Crimea: Extracts from the Letters and Journal of the late General Lord George Paget, K.C.B.* With a Map. London: Murray.

The *Dress, Horses, and Equipment of Infantry and Staff Officers*. By Captain Henry Hallam Parr, C.M.G. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co.

side. Colonel Buller had to escort the party to our camp, and on the way a river was reached, which two of the wives pretended to be afraid to cross. "Two troopers were therefore told off to take the ladies on their backs and swim over; but one, finding her cavalier rather knocking up in the transit, quickly dived off, and swam like a duck to the shore; immediately the other followed suit, and both reached the bank, leaving their bearers struggling in the stream, to be received on gaining the bank by the unmerciful laughter of their comrades. To add insult to injury, the fair ladies addressed them in Zulu, which the interpreter translated to be, 'Him no good.'" Mr. Tomasson has a bad opinion of the "ill-advised Dutchmen" till now in rebellion; but makes exception of "men like Paul Kruger and Joubert, fanatics of the Calvinist school, who, I am firmly convinced, are acting sincerely up to their convictions." Were this volume to reach a second edition, some qualifying remarks would doubtless be attached in explanation of the following sentence:—"The Boer will not fight unless driven into a corner whence there is no escape." The author was very disconsolate when his corps was broken up and his vision of a new British India became temporarily obscured. He is more to be pitied than Alexander, whose disappointment was of a negative order. Here there was a world waiting to be conquered. The late adjutant wonders where his former comrades are now to be found. He fears they will not be easily mustered again, for

Some are dead, and more are gone,
And others, beyond the seas,
Got scraped to death with oyster shells,
Among the Caribbees.

Mr. Tomasson's apologies for shortcomings in English composition take the form of a defiance to the critics to find any worse. It certainly did occur to us more than once that his grammar had, like his unfortunate comrades, got "among the Caribbees."

In a memorandum attached to the preface of Lord George Paget's book, the late author tells us he had lent his manuscript to many people to read, among others to Mr. Kinglake, "who had it in his possession for two years, I think, and who was so complimentary as to say that he learnt more from it than from all other accounts put together." Outside the circle of anecdote, and beyond the range of matters of interest only to the writer's own friends, there is therefore no news which has not been long ago discounted. The gallant officer took such a time to consider and re-consider whether his experiences were worth giving to the world—and, in that case, if and when he ought to give them—that the day has gone by when these would have secured any large share of the public attention. There are a few old generals, colonels, and others left who, after the appearance of this volume, will doubtless often fight Balaclava over again "across the walnuts and the wine." Leaving it to them to fight it out, we may briefly refer to a few of the writer's opinions on the proceedings of the day. It may here be remarked that, though Englishmen must ever take a deep pride in the heroic onsets of both heavy and light cavalry brigades in that battle, it should be remembered that in more recent wars an equally brilliant counterpart to these achievements has been found in the exploits of the cavalry of other armies. The French cuirassiers at Worth charged with no less gallantry than did the Light Brigade to inevitable destruction, and, as the ground traversed was in their case less favourable, the futile heroism of the act was still more remarkable. The Prussians at Mars-la-Tour were equally heroic, and far more scientific in the calculated sacrifice of their cavalry. In the matter of the charge of the Light Brigade there is a noticeable difference from either of the two above instances, in that there was neither calculation nor miscalculation involved. The whole business was a costly blunder. Lord Raglan never meant the cavalry to go at the guns they did go at; Sir Richard Airey entrusted his chiefs order to a hare-brained aide-de-camp to take to Lord Lucan; the aide-de-camp—Captain Nolan—interpreted, when appealed to, the order to suit his own view, or else really misinterpreted it; Lord Lucan felt bound to obey orders which he looked upon as absurd; and Lord Cardigan was bound to execute them, though they appeared to him monstrously unreasonable. Nevertheless, he started on his mission as became a gallant leader of a gallant following, and he had the good fortune to come back to tell the tale. Then he went to England; but, being "vain and ambitious," he made foolish speeches, as a man might be expected now and then to do on seeing the people of a great city scrambling for a hair of his horse's tail. These speeches begat counter-orations, and in due time we got the "Cardigan trial." Lord G. Paget, than whom no man perhaps was so well calculated to pass an opinion, and who, we can see from occasional remarks, was anything but partial to his immediate chief, believes that Lord Cardigan did his duty in the fight. He exonerates him from the imputation that he failed in his duty in not waiting after the ruin of his front line to lead or rally, or see what had become of his second line. He proves that when Lord Cardigan emerged from the chaos he could not, from his then position in the proper front of the guns, have discerned a single man of his supports. Mr. Kinglake is about of the same opinion. Lord George ventures the theory that Lord Cardigan might not have known for certain that his supporting regiments (at least the 4th and 11th) had ever moved forward. "It was well known," says the author, "that Lord Cardigan never looked back from the moment when he put spurs to his horse, and, for anything he could know to the contrary, the advance of those regiments might have been countermanded by the Lieut.-General; or their onward course

might have been impeded or turned aside by some eventuality unknown to him in this unusual contest." Certainly it was an unusual contest, and it would have been still more unusual had the supports failed to support the leading squadrons. Though Lord Cardigan could, as it happened, have done little or nothing towards directing or rallying the second line, a cooler head—we do not mean a stouter heart—would perhaps have exhibited some little curiosity as to what had become of half his command before making for home. It must be borne in mind that, on the eve of charging, Lord Cardigan several times and with marked emphasis urged the leader of his second line to give him his "best support." And with equal emphasis Lord George Paget promised his best support. Did Lord Cardigan assume, on the spur and in the excitement of the moment, that the second line had shared the fate of the first?

The author concludes his amiable, but probably just, remarks by a reflection. "I am sitting in an easy chair writing this!" and, full of daring as he was himself, he advises that people in easy chairs should be careful in their criticism of those who bore the burden and heat of a "somewhat uncomfortable day." We are unable, however, having regard to the weight of opposite opinion, to agree with him that the Light Brigade was judiciously restrained from falling on the flank of the Russian cavalry after their defeat by our "Heavies." It was their one great opportunity, and it was allowed to slip. So true is it that to be a good leader of cavalry implies the possession of exceptional qualifications, and that the occasions for utilizing cavalry come in a moment, and in a few moments may be gone altogether. Curiously enough, Lord George, after giving us cogent arguments why the Light Brigade should not have charged, winds up by avowing that, having been in second line, he could not see well how matters stood, and acknowledges that "subsequent information gained by conversations with some who were in the first line have tended to shake my confidence in my own opinion."

He is extremely partial to Lord Raglan, and we are pleased to find Lord Lucan receiving that justice which has too frequently been denied him by less competent critics. At the same time, the capital fault of that general on the Balaclava day is duly exposed. There is, indeed, no blinking the truth of Sir R. Airey's remark that, before getting the fatal order which he handed over to Lord Cardigan for execution, Lord Lucan had not made himself sufficiently acquainted with the general dispositions of the enemy and the features of the engagement that was going on. In consequence of this negligence Lord Lucan was entirely at a loss how to proceed when the crisis came.

At one time we are told the headquarters staff cordially hated the French; and once when the author was dining with Lord Raglan and the bugles of a French corps were heard in the distance, our chief exclaimed impatiently, "There they go with their eternal *too-too-tooting*, and they're good for nothing else." The staff naturally took their cue from the leader, and there can be no doubt some of the little misunderstandings between the allies arose quite as much from want of tact, courtesy, and sympathy on our part, as from exhibitions of vanity and eagerness to be first on that of the French. It is pleasant to read how, when Lord George Paget commanded a brigade at Eupatoria, and was directly under the orders of the French General d'Allonville, the excellent feeling subsisting between these two officers produced its natural effect throughout the entire force.

The book contains a number of details which can have no possible interest for the general public; on the other hand, there is a fair amount, if not of novel, of very readable matter.

It is laid down by Captain Parr that infantry officers, as a body, dress worse when in uniform than any other branch of the service. "Many officers who would never allow themselves to be seen in shabby garments when *en bourgeois*, think nothing of turning out in uniform which is very much the worse for wear." There can be no doubt that this is very often the case. "In some battalions," adds Captain Parr, "it is no unusual occurrence to see an officer in a battered forage cap and a shabby patrol jacket, with a dim scabbard and tattered sword-knot, inspect men whose apparel contrasts favourably with his own." Our own observation enables us to endorse the truth of the remark. Of course it goes without saying that officers who are slovenly and shabby in dress have an unsoldier-like appearance and demeanour on parade. Their gait, their salute, their manner of action during barrack square manoeuvres, are in close correspondence with their dress. Perhaps when the late excellent general order enjoining the wearing of uniform constantly in garrison towns has had time to work, we may be privileged to witness some improvement in the above respects. The best officers almost invariably dress well. The Duke of Wellington said of his officers in Spain that many of his best men were the greatest dandies. Sir Garnet Wolseley says, "The better you dress a soldier, the more highly he will be thought of by women, and consequently by himself." It must have frequently been observed by those who go abroad how much neater, and more like soldiers, both French and German officers look when walking about the streets of a town in uniform than our own do under the same circumstances. Even when our officers are well dressed, many of them seem to care little, if at all, whether they look like soldiers provided they have the appearance of gentlemen. British officers would, as a rule, find it difficult to look otherwise than gentlemen, but why should not they look also what they professionally are? Vicars and barristers do not strive their utmost to divest themselves of their professional "cut"; why should soldiers do so? Lord George Paget, in his "Crimean Journal"

relates, "I was riding to-day with the Duke of Cambridge about the French camp, when we fell in with St. Arnaud, and the contrast between him and Lord Raglan, whom we had just left, was very typical of the two nations. He had a staff of about twenty . . . with an orderly close to him carrying a beautiful silk tricolour standard. We rode with him to Lord Raglan, who came out in a mufti coat to meet him, and looked as much *less* like a C.-in-C. as *more* like a gentleman." It may have been only exceptionally that Lord Raglan turned out in this guise, but had he done so always when off parade it would certainly have been considered in the British camp as far "better form," and more the "correct thing," than had he moved about with the circumstance of a Commander-in-Chief in the field. And this way of looking at things has obtained wellnigh universally in our army down to the present time. The necessity, however, now laid heavily upon our officers of being practical soldiers, having a thorough knowledge of their work, and not merely walking characters upon a military stage for an occasional brief hour, will induce also in the matter of dress and professional demeanour a beneficial effect. The perpetual changes in the dress regulations are certainly calculated to discourage officers—especially those with slender means—from paying sufficient attention to their attire. In view of the heavy expense which alterations entail, every effort is made to take advantage of the permission to wear one thing out before getting the latest fashion. We fear the authorities have an idea that German victories were not wholly disconnected from the question of German habiliments. When Napoleon found the Emperor Francis and the King of Prussia engaged one day in profound discussion as to the proper number of buttons on a soldier's coat, he took care, he tells us, to join in and affect the greatest interest in the matter.

Captain Parr is not satisfied with the appearance of the majority of infantry officers when mounted, and we are not surprised this should be the case. No infantryman should be allowed to appear mounted on parade till he has been through a riding school, till he has provided himself with riding trousers and Wellington boots, and knows how to carry his sword, and salute in cavalry fashion. There are some useful hints in the book concerning the dressing of the staff, and on the subjects of saddlery, equipment, and chargers. The dress of the service, take it all round, is smart enough to please the ladies, very good for parade purposes, and in some instances serviceable enough for campaigning work. It is to be regretted that the great personages whose minds seem for ever exercised in devising new cuts for tunics and caps, and new patterns in lace, should not rather insist on existing regulations being carried out more strictly. Commanding officers who are sharp enough to detect the tiniest irregularity on the part of the men are often strangely indifferent as to the figure their officers make on parade.

OUR COUNTRY TOWNS.*

BOOKS on the rural districts of England by sympathetic and accomplished writers have been common enough. Enthusiasts like George Borrow and William Howitt have made us familiar with scenes that might well tempt the summer tourist to take his holiday on our own side of the Channel. They have interested us in our old castles, halls, and manor-houses, in picturesque country churches undefaced by restoration, in artistic "bits" of mediæval village architecture. We have pedestrians among us now like Mr. Louis Jennings, with the gift of describing what has charmed themselves so as to tempt their readers to follow them in their rambles. But our old country towns have been comparatively neglected, or, at all events, only alluded to incidentally. Nor is that unnatural, for to most people the enjoyment of the summer excursion consists in removing themselves as far as possible from anything resembling a city. The brain-worker, who toils amid brick and mortar, loves to get off the stones and away from an agglomeration of smoky chimneys, and to wander under shady trees, along field-paths and between green hedgerows. If he seeks even a quiet provincial town for bed and breakfast, he is inclined to hurry on his way the first thing in the morning. Mr. Rimmer has shown in what is literally a rambling volume that the tourist would often do well to linger in a spot where he may find a variety of unsuspected objects to interest him. Even so far as picturesqueness goes, there are towns in England that may vie with any of the show places in Brittany or South Germany. The pity of it is, that they are being modernized so fast that the man of taste must pay his visit to them now or never. While the remotest parts of the country stagnated, when communication with the busier world was slow and costly, the genius of conservatism was indisputably in the ascendant in them. The dreamy little place only woke up to some faint excitement on the weekly market day, going quietly to sleep again for the rest of the week. The inhabitants had neither money nor taste for embellishments, and were content to live on in the dwellings of their ancestors, keeping the old wood-work and metal-work in repair. The churchwardens sauntered along peaceably in the old-fashioned ways, and considered that their duties with regard to the venerable church were discharged when they kept the roof tolerably weathertight. But now the general growth of prosperity and the increasing acceleration of progress has been

changing all that. Towns that used to be half forgotten somewhere at the back of the world have woke up to the rattle of the railway trains; money has been flowing fast as new industries have been started. The crooked lanes have been made straight, and the narrow thoroughfares have been widened, as demolitions and reconstructions have been going on apace. That growth of activity ought to be gratifying in the extreme; nevertheless it is to be deplored by amateurs of the beautiful. So we have read Mr. Rimmer's lively volume with mingled feelings. On the one hand, it is pleasing to be reminded that time and the wreckers have spared so much that is quaint and curious; yet we know that too many of those memorials of the past are awaiting the doom that may overtake them at any moment.

Of the volume itself we can only say that it is in every respect excellent. It is written in an agreeable and gossiping style, while it contains a great deal of curious and out-of-the-way information. The author is evidently an enthusiast in archæology and mediæval history; but he always keeps his disquisitions on these subjects within bounds, and he changes the ground he lightly travels over so fast that he leaves us no time to feel *ennuyé*. He has extracted the local essences of countless county histories; he has the local legends and traditions at his finger-ends, and he links innumerable historic worthies with the scenes where they distinguished themselves by the threads of association he has been at pains to unravel. We gather incidentally that Mr. Rimmer is a strong partisan on historical questions and that he holds advanced views in politics. But his opinions are never offensively obtruded so as to ruffle the susceptibilities of those who differ from him, and they rather serve to give an air of individuality to a piquant narrative. He guards himself in his preface against being supposed to give anything like a comprehensive idea of our old country towns. But a glance at the table of contents will show how thoroughly and fairly he has sampled some of the most interesting parts of England. In the course of his perambulations he has embraced Derbyshire and Yorkshire, the Midlands, the Potteries, the Fens and the Cinque Ports, besides making promiscuous excursions in the North country, towards the Welsh Marches and elsewhere. He has illustrated the volume himself, and the illustrations do credit to his taste and execution, while they invite one to look into the accompanying letterpress. Many of them are slight and simple enough, but without exception they are artistically selected. Mr. Rimmer likewise is careful to disclaim the idea of writing anything like a guide-book, but beyond his outlines of attractive itineraries, there is one point of no little importance on which he gives the tourist some valuable hints. Now and then he notes a house of entertainment where he was impressed by the excellence of the fare and the moderation of the charges. Mr. Rimmer, who is an Englishman to the backbone, is somewhat depreciatory of foreign cookery, and occasionally insists upon comparisons which are doubtful, if not odious. But we should be inclined to trust his judgment on an English dinner or breakfast.

In a desultory volume where so much is attractive it is difficult to make satisfactory selections by way of examples; and when we detach scraps of the text from their context, we are almost sure to do the author some injustice. But if we do the best we can, we cannot do very badly for him. There is a group of old Cheshire towns that seems to be well worth a visit. At Malpas Mr. Rimmer makes allusion to its romantic associations with the days of chivalry, and he tells a strange story of an act of fantastic heroism in the plague that desolated the place in the beginning of the seventeenth century. There is another tradition about a visit paid to Malpas in disguise by his sacred Majesty King James I., who must have been roving somewhat in the manner of his ancestor of Picaresque memory, the Knight of Snowdon, in *The Lady of the Lake*. Malpas, we are told, with its market-place and fine old church, reminded him much of one of the quaint old towns in the Rhineland. Nor is the church at the neighbouring Nantwich much inferior, while in a vignette there is a view of such a roadway "as we might have expected to find in the Tudor period. In some parts, a man with a handcart would find a little difficulty in threading the narrow lane." Nantwich, where the streets have been steadily subsiding over the excavations of the salt-mines, is "well worthy of a visit, if only to see the curious way in which the houses incline towards each other and from each other in every direction, while props are used to keep them as nearly upright as circumstances will permit." At Whitchurch there is also "an ancient market-place with many fine old houses, but the chief interest centres in the church." In that church was buried the Talbot of Shakspeare, which sends Mr. Rimmer away on a pleasant digression as to the history in the First Part of *Henry VI.* Mr. Rimmer, by the way, is a firm believer in the immortal William's historical exactness, and holds that his account of the battle of Bosworth, with the events that preceded and followed it, is as trustworthy in point of fact as it is brilliantly dramatic. And crossing Staffordshire and clearing the towns in the Potteries at a bound, we may as well follow Mr. Rimmer to Bosworth Field as anywhere else. There is a charming view of it as it appears now, with King Richard's well in the foreground, indicating the features of the landscape as they influenced the fortunes of the battle. We are taken to Hincley, which has been greatly modernized since old Burton condemned it for want of uniformity; and to Atherstone, where Richmond slept the night before the battle at the inn of the "Three Tuns," which is still a respectable hostelry. Richard had his quarters at the appropriate sign of the "Blue Boar," in Leicester, and though the house has long since been pulled down, it has bequeathed its name to Blubber Lane.

* *Our Country Towns.* By Alfred Rimmer. Author of "Ancient Streets and Homesteads of England," &c. London: Chatto & Windus. 1881.

Mr. Rimmer takes his stand on the battlefield by the well, imagines the trees cleared away, maps out the ground with its strongly-marked features, posts the divisions of the opposing armies, with Sir Richard Stanley's command on the one flank and that of Lord Stanley on the other; and then, with constant reference to Shakespeare, discourses on the incidents of the memorable day. In a different style, he makes his chapters on the Marsh country equally interesting, dilating on its condition in the days when Hereward held out in his Camp of Refuge against the Conqueror, and referring to those successive attempts at reclaiming the fens which were finally crowned with success. The Abbey of Croyland, he says, is "even now a delight to a stranger," and the remarkable triple bridge there of which the Croyland monks were the authors and architects is worth going far to see. Local legend assigns to it a fabulous antiquity; but Mr. Rimmer unhesitatingly decides from the mouldings that it cannot possibly date back from before the beginning of the thirteenth century. The view of Whittlesea, which forms the frontispiece to the chapter, is a pretty picture of one of the pleasantest towns in the fens. Whittlesea boasts no less than three churches, one of them with a noble spire of the fourteenth century, some fine old houses, and "a quaint and ancient canopied market cross in the middle of the large open Market Square. . . . The spire of the church is very light and beautiful, and shows charmingly above the houses that surround the market-place." "Cambridge, Ely and Peterborough," are no doubt interesting enough, but seem to stand somewhat wide of the range of subjects we expect to find in such a book as Mr. Rimmer's. But, although Boston is too much of a city to be strictly included in his category, we should be sorry to spare the interesting chapter he devotes to its associations with the Puritans and its relations with its big Transatlantic namesake. As for the Cinque Ports, with which we must bring our notice to a close, there is nothing better in the volume than his description of them. Some of them, indeed, are romantic enough to awaken chords of poetry and eloquence in a more prosaically-minded narrator than Mr. Rimmer. He takes us back to the days when those flourishing maritime communities furnished their gallant contingents of ships to the navies of the Romans and Saxons, the Plantagenet kings and the Tudors. The citizens still retain some shadowy privileges, the last vestiges of their ancient glories. "The freemen of all the ports are called barons, and in former days they stood very much indeed upon their dignity, and ranked with the barons of the land." The sea that once made their fortunes has now left Hythe and Romney in the lurch; and there are broad tracts of the fertile pasture land that, according to the old Kentish proverb, give wealth without health, between highwater mark and the houses. We are still reminded of their former riches by the noble remains of their ecclesiastical buildings. And at Hythe Mr. Rimmer came upon a suggestive evidence of an industry the inhabitants had thriven by in later times. He gives a sketch of a house with a curious attic on the roof, commanding extensive views of the Channel, and still bearing the name of the "Smugglers' Lighthouse." He has no doubt that it was built to display a beacon for the guidance of those swift luggers of light draught that were on the look out to run their contraband cargoes. Hythe, having become a military station, has been greatly modernized. Nevertheless, besides its churches, it can still boast a couple of hospitals of very old foundation, while near it is a very noteworthy old cottage, which, in Mr. Rimmer's opinion, may really date from the reign of the second Richard. We might go on indefinitely directing attention to similar curiosities and to places which have their attraction for the archaeologist or artist. But we have said more than sufficient to recommend an attractive book.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION REPORT.*

THE Report of the second meeting of the Library Association, held at Manchester last year, makes as comely a volume as either of its predecessors, and much of what it contains is of interest to others besides librarians. One item, we may say at starting, is of interest to every one who has published, is publishing, or is about to publish a book, and to every book-buyer as well. It is the balance sheet of the Association, which contains an account of the cost of producing the former volume. If it was, as we believe, the same size as this, it contained about 190 or 200 pages imperial 8vo., or small folio size, in double columns; it was beautifully printed by Whittingham; the paper was of the thickest and richest kind; and the total cost of 180 copies was 45*l.*, or exactly five shillings a copy. If this is so, how is it that the combination between the publishers and the retail booksellers continues to enforce upon us the enormous and prohibitive prices that we have to pay for English books? The normal price for such a volume as this, in the shops, would be at least sixteen or eighteen shillings; the cost of producing it is five. Allow half-a-crown for author's profit and the same for the trade, and you get ten shillings—the price charged in France, Italy, Germany, everywhere but in England. Who profits by the present system is

known to the gods and to the publishers; certainly the author does not.

But it is not right to begin with a digression. Coming back to the volume itself, we find abundant evidence of the good work done by the Association. The papers come, with a few exceptions, under three heads; those which deal with the technicalities of library work; those which deal with Free Libraries and their organization; and those which deal with special libraries or collections of books. The first class is naturally rather beyond our scope; the mysteries of catalogue-making and indexing are only for the initiated; and these matters are properly left very much to committees, whose reports are for the experts to read and decide upon. One of these, however, is of more general interest—namely, the report on a general catalogue of English literature. This project, which is one that touches very closely a large number of students, has not been very fairly handled as yet. The Council of the Society of Arts were asked some years ago by their President, the Prince of Wales, "to consider what would be the cost of producing a universal catalogue of all books printed in the United Kingdom previous to 1600"—a plain question, susceptible, one would have thought, of a plain answer. But, as the Librarians show, the Society of Arts diverged into quite other questions, and never found out for the Prince what he wished to know. The question that now agitates them, and the librarians also, is how a universal catalogue of *all* English literature could be produced; is it practicable, or is it likely to be too costly and too difficult? The Trustees of the British Museum have been considering "the proposal to print in future the accessions (foreign as well as English) to the general catalogue of the British Museum"—amounting, incredible as it may seem, to 60,000 entries a year—and to circulate these printed accession-lists among subscribing libraries. This might lead to what some people desire so eagerly, the printing of the complete British Museum Catalogue; or it might be a help to the rival scheme for printing a general catalogue of the whole of English literature. As to these alternative proposals, the Report says:—

This Committee is in favour of the latter rather than the former of these two proposals. It seems to us that the printing of the Museum Catalogue as it stands is quite inadequate to our needs as regards English literature, and that if the titles of the English books in such a Catalogue were to be reprinted in a subsequent Catalogue of English Literature, an immense cost and trouble would be incurred twice over.

As before, the Committee feel that the true solution of the whole matter lies in the co-operation of our great national library with the other more important libraries throughout the country. If other libraries would supply the Museum with the titles of English books which the Museum does not possess, and the Museum would consent to incorporate them into the catalogue of their own English books, the task would be achieved. We should have a General Catalogue of English Literature, and the Museum would not only have catalogued its present possessions, but also its future acquisitions, in the printed English literature of four centuries.

It is difficult not to agree with these remarks, and it is difficult to see why this is not at once done. Is it necessary to wait for the Government or the Museum to do it? It would probably answer for private enterprise to undertake it; for it is not to be supposed that the cost would be beyond the returns. Suppose—to make a pure guess at the extent of the work—the catalogue were to occupy ten thousand double-column pages, and were to be sold at ten guineas. How many buyers would be forthcoming in the United Kingdom and America and Germany? We think it a fair estimate that five thousand copies would be taken up within the first two years, and that the proprietors would find themselves with a handsome profit in hand.

The Association occupies itself a good deal with what may be called the social, or semi-political, side of library affairs, especially with the questions how to develop and organize the Free Libraries. Mr. Nicholson of the London Institution, who is always active in this department, makes some proposals about the amendment of the Free Libraries' Acts which are well worth consideration by local authorities and by literary members of Parliament. It appears that there are now four Acts, amending one another; clearly they ought to be consolidated. Not to mention technical amendments that are required, Mr. Nicholson suggests various amendments of principle, of which the following are the chief:—There should be a power of disestablishment vested in the ratepayers; corrupt practices in applying the Acts should be far more carefully guarded against; the principle of the Act of 1877, which allows the use of voting-papers, should be generally adopted; a supplemental voluntary rate should be encouraged; Town Councils and similar bodies should have the right not only to submit the adoption of the Acts to a public meeting, but actually to adopt them; there should be special legislation for London; and public free libraries should be inspected. Some of these points are certainly debatable—for example, that which gives the Town Councils the power of adopting the Acts without special reference to the ratepayers; but some others of the suggestions are open to no objection. It is clear that, as Mr. Nicholson says, in many towns the Acts are not adopted because the ratepayers think that, whether the library turns out a failure or not, they are to be saddled with it for ever. School Boards can be disestablished under certain circumstances; why should there be no power of acting in the same way with libraries? Again, anything that prevents the undue interference of the landlords of compound householders with their tenants' votes should be welcomed. Mr. Nicholson says he can give the name of a landlord who, "in the presence of some of the leading supporters of the Acts, avowed that he had threatened to raise his tenants' rent sixpence a week unless they voted against the Acts"—and it is to

* *Transactions and Proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Library Association of the United Kingdom.* Held at Manchester, September 23, 24, and 25, 1879. Edited by the Secretaries, Henry R. Tedder, Librarian of the Athenæum Club, and Ernest C. Thomas, late Librarian of the Oxford Union Society. London: Printed at the Chiswick Press. 1880.

be feared that this landlord does not stand alone. Much would be done to check this by universally adopting the plan of voting "allowed," but not enjoined, by the Act of 1877—namely, that "the vote of the ratepayers should be taken by voting-papers left at, and collected from each house, instead of by public meeting and subsequent poll." It is impossible to say that the majority of ratepayers feel very keenly one way or another on the question of public libraries. They are benevolently neutral, but are easily turned into hostile voters if, by a factitious agitation, by the employment of rowdies at public meetings, and by other methods, it is made to appear that the Acts are in any particular town unpopular. If the voting were done quietly, and the arguments for and against were submitted to the citizens in print, the number of towns in favour of the Acts would no doubt be much larger than it is. If so, if free libraries become more common, it will be a satisfaction to every one to adopt Mr. Nicholson's suggestion of Government inspection. Two or three inspectors could annually go through all the free libraries that are likely to be in England in our time, and the cost would be trifling. The institutions are really a great boon to most of the towns in which they are adopted; at Manchester and Liverpool they are the greatest possible boon, and the very poorest of the people take full advantage of them. They ought to be developed in all ways; partly by such legislative amendments as Mr. Nicholson proposes, and partly by such means as other writers in this volume suggest—by co-operation with the Board Schools, and by lending themselves to schemes of lectures and popular instruction generally. There seems to be no reason why they should not in large towns have branch rooms in the more distant quarters, where the books in commonest use should be deposited in duplicate, and where a sufficient number of periodicals should be supplied. It is evident that a central free library can hardly expect to draw artisans who live more than, say, a mile away.

One of the most interesting papers in the volume is that written by Mr. Nodal on "Special Collections in Lancashire and Cheshire." As might be expected, there are many collections of local books, and books on local industries; and there are also collections of a more individual kind. The Manchester Library contains nearly eight hundred volumes on the cotton manufacture; Rochdale aims at a complete library of wool literature; and Wigan at possessing all that is known about engineering. Many private persons, too, have local topographical collections, such as the Rev. P. M. Herford, of Cheshire, with his three hundred volumes of Cheshire books, and Mr. Earwaker, the new historian of Cheshire, with his almost complete assemblage of maps, manuscripts, and books on the same subject. Some persons, however, find topographical subjects very dreary; to them we commend the more exciting collection of Mr. R. C. Christie, the learned author of *Etienne Dolet*, and those of Mr. Ireland, Mr. Crossley, and others here duly described. Mr. Christie's strength lies in the books of the Renaissance, though his Horaces are celebrated; his Aldines, though not quite so splendid a set as was lately to be seen in Piccadilly, are 276 in number; and his Lyons printed books are enough to make the French collectors die of envy. Etienne Dolet was not the best of publishers to deal with, but books of his printing are worth having. Mr. Christie has nineteen, "all of the highest rarity, four or five being the only copies known to exist." Mr. Crossley, the venerable President of the Chetham Institute, seems to have given his mind to Daniel Defoe among many other matters, and possesses "the whole of the 254 books and tracts enumerated in the list prefixed to Mr. Lee's *Life of Defoe*," and fifty-two others besides. A still more interesting possession is the yet unpublished MS. of Defoe's *Complete English Gentleman*; a book which the author had begun to print when his last illness came upon him. Mr. Crossley might well give this to the world. Mr. Ireland's collection contains all the editions of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*; all the works of Leigh Hunt and W. Hazlitt, &c. Mr. Salisbury has 18,000 volumes—probably an almost complete collection—relating to Wales and the four border counties; Mr. Rylands has all the Ptolemies ever published; and so the curious catalogue goes on. The reflection that strikes one most in reading it is, how easy it would be, and how desirable, to extend this sort of sketch or summary to the whole of the United Kingdom, and to publish a volume containing short authoritative accounts supplied as much as possible by the owners of all the best private libraries in England. Many of them are not large, and for that reason are apt to remain unknown; and to make them known would be really interesting to students and lovers of books. We commend the idea to Mr. Nodal, who would, we are sure, work it out admirably. Or the Association itself might do it, by means of the local librarians who already belong to it; and Mr. Nodal might be asked to act as editor-in-chief.

A MODERN SPHINX.*

ONE of the commonest (though by no means one of the worst) mistakes into which beginners in novel-writing fall is the putting of too much material into their books. The old hand sins in a directly opposite manner, being content with a minimum of

new matter smothered in "some of my own sauce," as Beau Tibbs's wife has it. But the amateur, probably because he really has something to say or because he is afraid of seeming stingy in the quantity of provender he sets before his guests, constantly spreads his action over too long a time, introduces too many characters, describes too many scenes, dwells on too many incidents. Major Rogers has in some sort fallen into this error. We should say that his book would have gained not a little if about half its substance had been cut away; by which we do not mean that there are too many words or too many pages, but that the actual matter is too copious. It requires a more practised juggler to keep a dozen balls going in the air at once than to keep half a dozen, yet somehow the unpractised jugglers seem to prefer the more difficult feat.

The scene of *A Modern Sphinx* is laid in Demerara, and is thus tolerably fresh. We do not remember to have read any Demerara novel since Mr. Jenkins's *Lutchmee and Dilloo*, which was entirely occupied with the wrongs of coolies and the wickedness of planters. *A Modern Sphinx* barely mentions the interesting "aborigin," as his defenders have been known to call him, and busies itself almost entirely with garrison life and colonial society of the upper class. It opens with the arrival of a new regiment at Georgetown, and with the ball given, according to custom, to celebrate that arrival. The reader may think (erroneously) that he has discovered the Modern Sphinx in a certain Captain Seagrave, the philosopher, the misogynist, and in a manner the butt of Her Majesty's —th Regiment. This officer is introduced at great length as being quizzed by his brother officers, especially the officer in command, a mysterious Major Catherwood, with an evilly handsome countenance and a habit of sneering. The conversation of the gallant —th is of an innocent kind, and unless Major Rogers is cryptically satirical it more than justifies Thackeray's Stubble and Spooner caricatures. All the —th except Seagrave are confirmed lady-killers, the Doctor having slain his thousands and the Major his tens of thousands. Seagrave is an exception to this weakness, or this conquering habit, whichever we ought to call it; but at the ball he falls hopelessly into the toils of a young lady who rejoices in the odd name of Creoline—which suggests a combination of crinoline and cresosote. The redoubtable Catherwood, with the worst intentions and antecedents, constitutes himself his rival; and so one part of the plot is, so to speak, laid out for us. There is plenty more, however. The —th have brought with them a frisky matron, native to the place, one Mrs. Barton, who flirts abominably with her Creole cousin, a lawyer and Civil Servant, named George Grey. He has a wife still friskier, who flirts with everybody, but especially with a subaltern of the regiment, Lieutenant Burke. To these characters (to mention only an indispensable addition) has to be added Dr. FitzJames, the senior medical officer of the station, an ill-tempered and hideous little person, who frequents ladies' society assiduously (though he abuses it at mess), and keeps himself in many ways mysteriously to himself. All these persons, and a great many more for whom we have no space, dance, flirt, eat, drink, and generally intrigue a great deal. We are early informed of a bad kind of business in which Mrs. Barton and the Lawyer Grey are concerned, and which turns on the malversation of certain property which Grey, by evil practices, has got into his hands. This, with the passion of Seagrave and Catherwood for Creoline, and a great many mysterious embranchments of lost heirs and changed names and such like things, form the substance of the story.

The book, in spite of the faults of plan and construction which have been noticed, and of others in the writing, especially in the dialogue, is fairly readable, though few parts of it deserve higher praise than this. The few which do so deserve are for the most part episodic. Major Rogers has been pursued by the desire to give good measure, pressed down and heaped up and running over, even in the details of his plot. The complications, for instance, which attend the end of the unlucky George Grey are so preposterously involved that they recall nothing so much as the story of the would-be suicide who arranged a fourfold end for himself, were it not that this ingenious person finally escaped, while Mr. Grey did not. In the first place, Mr. Grey puts himself in peril of the clutches of the law, as has been already pointed out, by meddling with other people's property. Then he suddenly overhears a poor relation of his friend and cousin, Mrs. Barton, confessing knowledge of his guilt, and, "in the hurry of the moment," as Mr. Samuel Morley would say, brains her with an iron bar. Having committed this rash act in full sight of a sentry, he is shot at but missed. Then he finds Georgetown on fire, and heroically distinguishes himself in rescuing persons and properties from the flames. Then he is arrested and sentenced to death for the murder. Then a plot is formed by the foreman of the jury and several other persons of respectability to half-poison him with woorali, get him out of prison, and bring him to life again. Then, the execution of this being entrusted to Mrs. Barton, who is half-mad with narcotics, she administers the wrong sort of poison, and the unlucky, but, after all, murderous lawyer, dies for good and all. Such a concatenation is the sort of thing which is possible in real life; but it is so intrinsically improbable that it is out of the range of incidents allowable for fiction. If this sounds like a paradox to any tiro in novel-writing, let him reflect over it till he comes to understand it, for in it lies a valuable secret. We are constantly told that such and such a story is "founded on fact." There could not be a worse recommendation, for at least a considerable number of facts are quite unsuitable for literary treatment. The mistake is indeed only another form of the

* *A Modern Sphinx*. By Major E. Rogers. 3 vols. London: J. & R. Maxwell, 1881.

naturalist heresy which is just now working such havoc with French fiction.

The most attractive part of the book is to be found in a description of a picnic up the country, which, though as usual a great deal too full of incident, has some liveliness. The misogynist, Captain Seagrave, who from first to last is something of a nuisance, does indeed vary it with appalling speeches of this sort:—

Listen then while I warn you solemnly of the inevitable fate that awaits you, that already seems to engulf you, and that will assuredly carry you as uncontrollably to an unknown inscrutable hereafter as the waters around us do a leaflet. Yet, it seems, I can as little hope to turn the river from its source as interfere to prevent it.

It is not surprising that the unfortunate young woman to whom this rigmorale is addressed remarks that her companion "speaks enigmas." Fortunately, however, the party is large, and its members do not all talk about inscrutable hereafters, though Major Rogers himself is nearly as bad as his hero. When he wishes to tell us that three young officers who managed the picnic wished to get their party comfortably arranged, he says that "they felt themselves in duty bound to concentrate the incongruous elements of the picnic party round some acknowledged focus." An acknowledged focus is certainly one of the oddest synonyms for a young woman, even if her name be Creoline, that we have ever heard. So, too, the following is a sentence which we cannot commend.

Even Dr. FitzJames' fealty to the dusky young ladies was open to much ill-natured construction as to the use he would make of the pleasures that passed, forged as it were for the delectation of Mrs. Elrington, who sat aloof conversing chiefly with her bantering husband.

This odd dialect, however, is more tolerable when the author describes than when he "dialogues." And he had a great deal to describe in this picnic on the Essequibo. As soon as his guests have exchanged their steamer for Indian canoes, a deer is hunted by a jaguar across their path, and, the party scattering in pursuit, Major Catherwood and Mrs. Grey are left alone. They lose their way, of course, and another jaguar turns up "promiscuous," followed by an ant-bear. Dim reminiscences of the early works of Captain Mayne Reid, we must confess, crowded on us when we came to this. The ant-bear and the jaguar have a battle royal, and Major Catherwood, not over-fairly, seizes the opportunity of the conclusion of a round to finish the jaguar with his gun-barrel, and to knife both it and the bear. This is entirely contrary to the best traditions of English sport, and after reading it we can quite believe that Major Catherwood was a bad man. He is exhausted, and goes to sleep by Mrs. Grey's side, which, as she wants him to flirt with her and is a little afraid of more jaguars, annoys her a good deal. Then he wakes up, and they discover an Indian hut cheerfully occupied by a corpse, a pot of woorali, and a mourner, who is with great difficulty persuaded to guide them out of the wilderness. We cannot follow this remarkable picnic any further, except to remark that a canoe accident, with half a dozen deaths by drowning and a general succumbing to "Yellow Jack," complete its delights. Altogether it must be acknowledged that the author's preliminary and moralizing description of picnics is justified by his instance. "This sort of entertainment," he says, "is an anomalous one, anticipated with transcendent delight, enjoyed in limited measure, and frequently recalled with unmitigated disgust." The last clause, in particular, seems thoroughly applicable to Essequibo picnics, if we are to suppose that jaguars, ant-bears, dead men's corpses, drowning, and yellow fever are usual or frequent incidents of them.

We have already declined to enter into the intricacies of Major Rogers's *dénouement*, wherein Dr. Fitzjames turns out to be a very surprising kind of medicine-man, and most of the remaining characters are served heirs or heiresses to peerages, great estates, and other desirable hereditaments. Whether it was desirable to reproduce in a novel the tolerably well-known story of the strange being who is here called Dr. Fitzjames may be an open question. The chronology of the book is a little difficult, and characters which have but little to do with the general action wander about its pages in a miscellaneous condition. Altogether, the book is what German critics would call a very inorganic one. Considering the awkwardness of the writing, the involved and congested condition of the plot, and other faults, it is rather odd that the readableness which in a manner it does possess should remain to it. Perhaps this may be set down as due to the fact that Major Rogers, in writing on Demerara, writes about a subject with which he is familiar. An ounce of observation certainly goes further in novel-writing than a pound of anything else—another point which might with advantage be borne in mind oftener than it is.

GERMAN LITERATURE.

IT is seldom indeed that a competition for a prize essay produces such a performance as Professor Schanz's work on the commercial policy of England at the close of the mediæval period (1), more especially under Henry VII. and Henry VIII. The proposal emanated from the University of Göttingen, but so substantial a result could hardly have been looked for by that

learned body. In two thick volumes Professor Schanz traces the relations of England with every Continental State with which commercial intercourse, on any scale worth mentioning, was maintained by her during the period under his notice, with the addition of a most voluminous index of *pieces justificatives*. By this method of treatment the author is led to enter successively into the commercial affairs of each of the Continental States in its turn, and the result is a series of admirable monographs, full of condensed information, and far more lively and entertaining than could have been expected by any one unversed in the subject. We trace the relations of England to such great commercial and industrial communities as the Flemish cities, the Hanse Towns, and Venice, all at that time greatly her superiors in wealth and civilization. We see how reasons of State policy contributed to foster commerce, as when, for instance, Edward IV.'s desire to marry his daughter to a Spanish prince led him to grant Spanish merchants equal privileges with his own subjects. We follow the intricate negotiations between the Venetian Ambassador and Wolsey, and the decay and ultimate extinction of the Venetian commerce, once so important. We admire the sagacity of the Hanse Towns in supporting Edward IV., notwithstanding his previous unfriendly conduct towards them; and learn the narrow escape which Iceland had of becoming an English possession when Christian II. of Denmark sought in his distress to pawn it to Henry VIII. The historical portion of the work is succeeded by a series of most interesting dissertations on trading companies in England, on protection to native industry, on the rights and privileges of foreigners, the currency, means of communication, and other subjects intimately connected with commerce. The second volume contains copious statistics of exports and imports, with a treatise on the tariff and the Custom-house system in general; and a great number of documents and records, English and foreign. It is remarkable how few obsolete words occur in the former, notwithstanding the quaintness of the style.

The assumed introduction of real personages and revelation of political secrets have helped the novels of "Gregor Samarow" to a popularity to which their merits as works of fiction are far from entitling them. The writer now comes forward (2) in his own person as the historian of the fall of the Kingdom of Hanover. He occupied, as would appear, a confidential position about the person of the King, and exercised a backstairs influence not altogether without efficacy in furthering the rise or fall of Cabinets in the miniature kingdom. He was also a Press Commissioner, charged with suggestions for the regulation of the press at home, and with negotiations with influential papers abroad. Some natural desire to embellish his motives and magnify his office must be looked for; but, on the whole, Herr Meding appears to write in a spirit of impartiality, and his most unfavourable portraits do not seem to be malicious or caricatured. The misfortune of his book is the want of engrossing interest, or any immediate bearing upon the great events of European history. Hanoverian statesmen were but straws upon the tide, with the liberty, indeed, of determining whether they themselves would swim or sink, but without the slightest influence upon the mighty flood itself. From Herr Meding's account, it would appear that numerous petty misunderstandings had arisen from time to time between the Prussian and Hanoverian Courts, sufficiently irritating to the latter to obscure the obvious common-sense consideration that Austria was too far off to be formidable as an enemy or useful as an ally, while Prussia was near enough for both. The characters of the leading personages about the King of Hanover are depicted with spirit and apparent candour; but the most interesting portrait is that of the King himself. In his deep religious feelings, in his domestic virtues, in his homely good sense, occasionally counteracted by obstinacy and the propensity to view affairs through a false medium; in his quaint punctiliousness, even in his blindness and his love of music, he strongly reminds us of his grandfather, George III.; but no trace, at least in Herr Meding's papers, appears of George III.'s imputed cunning and insincerity. One anecdote bespeaks a liberality of feeling uncommon in a German prince. A Premier having recommended two incompetent noblemen for seats in the Cabinet, and having met the King's objections by stating that he proposed to give each an able secretary to keep him straight, the King desired that the secretaries should be made Ministers in name as well as in fact, which was accordingly done, to the horror of the Hanoverian aristocracy. Most of the personages sketched by Herr Meding have been politically extinguished by the annexation, but there are noticeable exceptions in Herr Bennigsen and Herr Windthorst.

The fifth volume of Karl Hillebrand's "Epochs, Nations, and Men" (3) is devoted to personages or phases of the Revolutionary period or the era which ushered it in. Many of them have appeared in the *Rundschau*. Among the most interesting are those on Catherine II. and Metternich. Catherine is very leniently judged, mainly with reference to her recently published correspondence with Grimm, in which her character certainly appears to the best advantage. The writer is thus enabled to ignore the ruthlessness of her foreign policy and the scandals of her private life, and to dwell mainly on the cheerfulness, amiability, genial good sense, and considerate kindness to inferiors, which certainly render her a *rara avis* among autocrats. Metternich is more severely, but

(1) *Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Zeitalters der beiden ersten Tudors*. 2 Bde. Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot. London: Williams & Norgate.

(2) *Memoiren zur Zeitgeschichte*. Von Oskar Meding. Abth. 1. Vor dem Sturm. Leipzig: Brockhaus. London: Williams & Norgate.

(3) *Zeiten, Völker, und Menschen*. Von Karl Hillebrand. Bd. 5. Aus dem Jahrhundert der Revolution. Berlin: Oppenheim. London: Williams & Norgate.

not less equitably, judged. Hillebrand allows him an extraordinary diplomatic talent, but deplora the want of insight and foresight which prevented him, with unexampled opportunities, from doing anything to adapt the institutions of Austria to the needs of the times. The article on Napoleon and Mme. de Rémusat is also impartial, although the applicability of the proverb about the hero and his *violet de chambre* may not have been sufficiently borne in mind. The review of English thought in the eighteenth century is mainly based upon Mr. Leslie Stephen's work on the subject. There is a pleasing portrait of Montesquieu, and an entertaining one of Count Albergati, an Italian dramatist of the latter part of the eighteenth century, deservedly forgotten as an author, but worthy of remembrance as a type of the man of letters of the period.

The late Prince Consort's letters to the present Emperor of Germany, at the time Prince Regent of Prussia (4), have been excerpted from Sir Theodore Martin's biography, retranslated, as it would appear, into German, and printed in a very elegant form. The Prince nowhere appears to more advantage than in this correspondence, which, as the editor remarks, also evinces the Prince Regent's rapid progress in the comprehension of the duties of a constitutional sovereign.

Those cuneiform inscriptions are of especial interest which, by their mention of Cyrus (5), afford means of testing the veracity of Herodotus, and reconciling discrepancies in Scriptural and profane chronology. Dr. Floigl endeavours by their aid to settle Median and Lydian chronology, and to determine the date and duration of the Scythian irruption into Asia. His conclusions may possibly be sound, but his method of working them out is obscure and tortuous.

The ninth part of Dr. Fürst's valuable "Bibliotheca Rabbinica" (6) contains the Midrash on the Book of Esther. It is almost needless to remark that these contribute nothing to the understanding of the book. From the point of view of a modern commentator, Rabbinical exegesis is perfectly childish. Expositors dispute whether Haman's cushions were of gold without and silver within, or *vice versa*; and agree that Mordecai's reason for refusing to bow down to him was that he wore an idol upon his breast, to which also obeisance would have been made. The real value of these commentaries consists in the lively picture conveyed by them of the Jewish national feeling at the time of their composition, its patriotic intolerance and sullen resentment against the Gentile persecutor, feelings which the subject-matter of Esther is especially calculated to call forth. They also embody some interesting anecdotes and fables.

Dr. Horstmann's collection of old English metrical legends (7) is a work of extraordinary merit and industry. It contains fifty-eight narrative poems on sacred or ecclesiastical subjects, all of considerable length, besides an appendix of shorter pieces, the whole transcribed by the editor from MSS. in English libraries, with the various readings subjoined where there is more than one MS. The extreme value of such a collection for the history alike of the English language and of English poetry requires no pointing out, and its importance is increased by the masterly and almost equally laborious introduction. In this the writer takes a general view of the nature of the ecclesiastical legend, explaining its relation to hagiography on the one hand, and to the homily on the other. The original purpose of the legend was strictly one of edification; it was an excerpt from, or adaptation of, the voluminous *Acta Sanctorum*, and gradually almost usurped the place of the less interesting homily. The adaptation of tales at once so popular and so pious to the purposes of the minstrel was an obvious step, but it must be allowed that the mediæval bards edited by Dr. Horstmann appear to have kept edification fairly in view, and to be by no means obnoxious to the charge of subordinating their religious mission to the display of their profane accomplishments. At the same time they are for the most part no contemptible writers; their diction is commonly clear and forcible; their narrative, if artless, compact and effective; and their simplicity is frequently very touching. It is remarkable that the early metrical legends manifest a great superiority over the last, the work of a writer of the Reformation period, of which a unique copy, printed when Shakespeare was an infant, is extant in the Pepysian Library. Dr. Horstmann remarks that the earliest English literature was pre-eminently ecclesiastical in type, and that the legend represented its highest development on the imaginative side. He distinguishes between the Southern English literature, in which the legend proper predominated, and the Northern, which rather inclined to the homily. His preface further contains a sketch of the principal collections of legends, with an account of the peculiarities of the MSS. containing them.

Dr. Oesterley's (8) Historical and Geographical Dictionary of Mediæval Germany is an important work, whose scope is best ex-

plained in the compiler's own language:—"An alphabetical arrangement of the names of places in Germany mentioned by German historians of the middle ages, with the various forms under which they occur, the periods at which they are mentioned, the more important events connected with them, and the authorities." The work will be completed in twelve parts, the first of which is now published.

F. Babsch's essay upon the place of the ancient Germans in universal history (9) is mainly a collection of the principal passages in ancient historians relating to them, and a general review of their relation to other races and their domestic manners and institutions. It is well executed, but not distinguished by any remarkable novelty.

Johannes Turnmair, surnamed Aventinus (10), whose minor works the Bavarian Academy is publishing, is described by his editor as the founder of scientific history in Germany and the "Bavarian Herodotus." He was born in 1477, and wrote in the early part of the sixteenth century. He was evidently a very learned and diligent antiquary; but the writings hitherto published are scarcely of sufficient compass to exhibit his historical merits, and the gravity with which he records that Tuisco reigned over the Germans for 236 years seems to indicate that, if he had really started on the track of scientific investigation, he had not proceeded very far.

The philosophy of Nicolaus Cusanus (11) (1401-64) is interesting as an attempt to give a philosophical form to the pantheistic ideas which, in the guise of religious mysticism, had long been current in Germany. Cusanus himself is a striking figure as a cardinal with a genius for metaphysical speculation, and as the intellectual precursor of a long line of German philosophers with similar tendencies. Carrière compares his relation to Giordano Bruno with that of Pythagoras to Plato. Dr. Falckenberg's examination of his system is most thorough. Its general drift is sufficiently clear, but the details are often difficult to elucidate.

Dr. Bahnsen's application of dialectics to the problems of philosophy (12) bears evidence, at all events, of the writer's having applied his mind vigorously to the subject; but, until at least the last few pages, which treat of the problems suggested by various branches of chemical inquiry, it deals wholly with abstractions, in a technical style unintelligible to all except highly trained metaphysicians.

Dr. Baas's abridged History of Medicine (13) is not a work of great pretensions, but will be found adequate by the majority even of professional readers. It gives a concise and clear chronological account of the principal medical schools and medical writers; and it is but inevitable that a considerable part of the information should obviously be imparted at second hand.

The most recent parts of the *Encyclopædia of the Natural Sciences* (14), edited by Professor Jäger and his colleagues, contains the continuation of the treatises on botany and mathematics, and of the dictionary of zoology and anthropology. The latter is laudably compact and condensed, but the mixture of the tribes of mankind with all manner of beasts, birds, and creeping things produces an almost grotesque effect.

Mr. Carpenter's little grammar of the Icelandic language, as now spoken and written (15), not only contains full grammatical rules, but a chrestomathy and vocabulary, and is preceded by a brief but interesting sketch of the vicissitudes of the language.

The most important article in the *Rundschau* (16) is the first part of a review, apparently by the same anonymous writer who has so frequently exhibited his acquaintance with diplomatic secrets in this periodical, of the political career of the Marquis Wielopolski, the well-intentioned but unsuccessful statesman who endeavoured to perform the part of a Polish Deak by mediating between his country and Russia. The author evidently considers that Wielopolski was right, and that the Russian Government and his own countrymen displayed an equal want of intelligence in failing to enter into his ideas. Poland and Russia, he thinks, are equally necessary to each other. "The Age of Credit," a lecture by a professor at Prague, pleads for an extension of the facilities afforded by credit to the working classes, and is chiefly remarkable as another testimony to the depressed condition of these classes in Germany. "From Athens to Delphi" and "Flemish Studies" are agreeable light reading; the latter is especially concerned with the legends and folklores of the Flemings.

(9) *Die alten Germanen in der Universalgeschichte und ihre Eigenart.* Von F. Babsch. Wien: Hölder. London: Williams & Norgate.

(10) *Johannes Turnmair's, genannt Aventinus, sämtliche Werke.* Herausgegeben von der K. Akademie der Wissenschaften. Bd. 1. Hft. 2. München: Kaiser. London: Williams & Norgate.

(11) *Grundzüge der Philosophie des Nicolaus Cusanus, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Lehre vom Erkennen.* Von Dr. R. Falckenberg. Breslau: Köbner. London: Williams & Norgate.

(12) *Der Widerspruch im Wissen und Wesen der Welt.* Von Dr. Julius Bahnsen. Bd. 1. Berlin: Grieben. London: Nutt.

(13) *Leitfaden der Geschichte der Medicin.* Von J. H. Baas. Stuttgart: Enke. London: Kolckmann.

(14) *Encyclopædie der Naturwissenschaften.* Herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. G. Jäger, &c. Abth. 1. Lief. 14, 19. Breslau: Trewennt. London: Nutt.

(15) *Grundriss der Neu-Islandischen Grammatik.* Von W. H. Carpenter. Leipzig: Schöche. London: Nutt.

(16) *Deutsche Rundschau.* Herausgegeben von Julius Rodenberg. Jahrg. vii. Hft. 7. Berlin: Paetel. London: Trübner & Co.

(4) *Aus dem politischen Briefwechsel des deutschen Kaisers mit dem Prinzen von England aus den Jahren 1854 bis 1861.* Gotha: Perthes. London: Williams & Norgate.

(5) *Cyrus und Herodot.* Nach den neugefundenen Keilinschriften. Von Dr. Victor Floigl. Leipzig: Friedrich. London: Williams & Norgate.

(6) *Der Midrasch zum Buche Esther.* Ins Deutsche übertragen von Dr. A. Wünsche. Leipzig: Schulze. London: Williams & Norgate.

(7) *Altenglische Legenden. Neue Folge.* Mit Einleitung und Anmerkungen herausgegeben von C. Horstmann. Heilbronn: Henninger. London: Williams & Norgate.

(8) *Historisch-geographisches Wörterbuch des deutschen Mittelalters.* Von Dr. H. Oesterley. Lief. I. Gotha: Perthes. London: Williams & Norgate.

NOTICE.

We beg leave to state that we decline to return rejected Communications; and to this rule we can make no exception.

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The SUMMER SESSION will commence on Monday, May 2. The Prize Distribution will take place in July, of which due notice will be given.

Lectures.
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On Wednesdays and Saturdays, at 8 o'clock, A.M.
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THREE PROFESSORS, who shall undertake one or more of the following subjects—Mathematics (including Theoretical and Applied Mechanics), Physics, Chemistry, Physiology, Biology, Geology.

The work of the College will be divided into Four Departments, whose arrangement will depend on the subjects undertaken by the Professors elected, but it is intended that the three scientific departments shall severally comprehend:

1. Mathematics and Mechanics,
2. Chemistry,
3. Natural Science,

and that the subject of Physics shall be placed as a subject of principal importance in one or other of those departments.

Applicants are invited to specify the subjects which they would be prepared to undertake. Applications for the above appointments to be addressed to the Town Clerk, Municipal Offices, Nottingham, endorsed "University College," on or before the 7th day of May next. Particulars of salaries, duties, and conditions will be sent upon application to the Town Clerk. Candidates are especially requested to abstain from canvassing.

SAM. GEO. JOHNSON, Town Clerk.

Municipal Offices, Nottingham, March 22, 1881.
THE Council of Firth College, Sheffield, intend to appoint a PRINCIPAL, who shall also be Professor either in the Literary or in the Mechanical Department of the College.

These Departments will comprehend respectively the following subjects:
1. Classics, History, Literature, Political Economy, Moral Science.

2. Mathematics, Mechanics, Engineering, Geology, Physics.

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The Salary of the said Principal will be £500 per annum, with Half the Fees of his own Classes.

The Council will only make the appointment in event of suitable candidates presenting themselves.

Candidates are requested to give full particulars concerning age, experience, and any Academic or other attainments, together with any other information likely to affect the decision of the Council. The names of three gentlemen to whom references may be made should be given, but no testimonials need be sent unless they are asked for.

Applications to be sent on or before the 25th day of April next, to

Firth College, Sheffield, March 24, 1881. ENSOR DRURY, Registrar.

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